THE WORK OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

RAY CLARKSON HARKER

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The work of the Sunday-
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The Work of the Sunday-School

A Manual for Teachers

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By
RAY CLARKSON HARKER, D. D.

NEW YORK CHICAGO TORONTO
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LONDON AND EDINBURGH

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FLEMING H. REVELL COMPANY

New York: 158 Fifth Avenue
Chicago: 123 North Wabash Ave.
Toronto: 25 Richmond Street, W.
London: 21 Paternoster Square
Edinburgh: 100 Princes Street

To

that splendid volunteer army of Sunday-school workers who so patiently and persistently pray and work for the coming of Christ's kingdom in the earth this volume is appreciatingly dedicated.

Preface

NO apology is needed for sending forth another book concerning the work of that institution which is receiving the increasing attention of the Christian world, and which is doing so much for the establishment of Christ's kingdom in the earth.

This little volume is an attempt to give hint, at least, as to where strategic work may be done for the ushering in of our Lord's kingdom. Most of the chapters deal with the prime factors and forces which have commanding place in shaping the destiny of the Church. This book does not pretend to touch even a majority of the important themes relative to the Sunday-school. It treats a few of the supremely significant factors.

The preparation of these chapters has been a work of rare delight amid the press of a busy pastorate. The work has been done with an ever-deepening conviction that the increasing triumphs of the Gospel must be won among the young, and with a grow-

ing appreciation of the value of Bible study for both young and old.

Excerpts from several of the chapters have appeared in the *Sunday-School Journal* and in *The Adult Bible Class*. By the courteous consent of the editors of these publications these portions are here reproduced.

If those who read these pages are inspired to greater appreciation of the Sunday-school, and are led to a deeper consecration of their powers to build the Church of Christ through the Sunday-school, the author will be amply rewarded.

R. C. H.

Freeport, Ill.

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I

THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL; ITS ORIGIN AND HISTORY; ITS MISSION AND POWER

"An enterprise which enlisted the active devotion of Raikes, with his business sagacity, of Hannah More, with her brilliant social charm, of Charles of Bala, with his apostolic zeal, of William Wilberforce, the peer of William Pitt for eloquence, and of John Wesley, the foremost religious leader of the century, was bound to succeed. Its founders were not fanatics nor visionaries. They were eminently sane and practical, and their intellects were as keen as their affections were warm."

—*T. Harwood Pattison.*

"An untaught generation—untaught in any form of the divinely appointed Bible-school—was a sure result; and the religious decline of New England was inevitable."

—*H. Clay Trumbull.*

"The Apostolic Church made the school the connecting link between herself and the world."—*Baron Bunsen.*

"To say that God is in this movement is only to emphasize the fact that the Sunday-school is a part of His organized Church among men. The growth and efficiency of the Sunday-school, especially in its teaching and spiritual power, is a sure test of the presence in the Church of the spirit and law of Christ towards childhood."—*Bishop Hartzell.*

"Nearly all in the membership of a church to-day were directly or indirectly helped to decision for Christ through the Sunday-school. We shall not be far into the twentieth century until all in the church shall have been trained in the Sunday-school."—*John Potts.*

I

The Sunday-School; Its Origin and History; Its Mission and Power

HOME is our first school. This school is as old as the race. It has been estimated that for fifteen hundred years the home was the only agency for the development of character. In the Book of Deuteronomy [1] the parental responsibility is plainly indicated: "And thou shalt teach them (the commands of God) diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."

Moses [2] exhorts collective Israel saying: "Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life; but teach them thy sons, and thy sons' sons." The word of Paul [3] to Timothy, "that from a child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures," hints of a home training.

[1] Deut. vi. 7; xi. 19, 20. [2] Deut. iv. 9. [3] 2 Tim. iii. 15.

Among the Jews the mother doubtless had her part in the early development of the child, and "the father was bound to teach his son." "There can be no question," says Edersheim, "that according to the law of Moses, the early education of a child devolved upon the father; of course always bearing in mind that his first training would be the mother's."

We read in the New Testament, "And they brought young children to Christ." It is well for fathers to remember that the pronoun, "they," in that verse is masculine, not feminine, in the original Greek. Edersheim says: "It was, indeed, no idle boast that the Jews 'were from their swaddling-clothes . . . trained to recognize God as their Father, and as the Maker of the world'; that, 'having been taught the knowledge (of the laws) from earliest youth, they bore in their souls the image of the commandments.'" [1]

The function of the home is not simply to care for the physical body, but to train the mind, to furnish a sanctuary for the heart. If man can be defined as: "A little lump of flesh, a handful of intellectual germs, a bundle

[1] "The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah," Vol. I, p. 230.

of moral roots," [1] then home must be a place for love to grow in, as well as for mind and body. The Greeks were right in calling home, "The Shrine of the gods." And of most children it may be said, "that if they have no church in the home they have no home in the church."

That little life in your home can be led through the school of temptation safely to the goal of virtue, or it can be neglected as it passes through the years of testing, and arrive at the goal of vice and shipwreck. To one of these it is sure to come. In training the child in the home there is a chance to work with God.

We have also the *public school.* It is one of the safeguards of the nation. Many of the truest and manliest qualities are fostered and cultivated in this school. Pupils are here taught the evils of ignorance, the degradation of vice, the baneful results of idleness. The most uncultured and unkempt here learn the value of regularity, punctuality, cleanliness, politeness, industry, attention, and obedience. They catch a glimpse of the hardihood of life, their latent faculties are developed, the folly of their ignorance is shown to them, the wayward are corrected, and the

[1] Hillis, "Place of Christ," p. 5.

indifferent are brought to a recognition of their responsibility. The public school is a destroyer of caste, it obliterates distinctions. In it the son of the humblest toiler is on an equality with the son of the millionaire. It is the great educator of equality, and if true democracy is to continue, the public school must continue. This guardian of the state must be kept pure, because it is the centre and heart of the nation, and through it the nation's life-blood is passing.

But the institution we are to consider is the Sunday-school, the Bible-school.

1. *Its origin and history.* Biblical scholars claim that this school is twenty centuries older than the pulpit. Prophets of the Old Testament days were only occasional spokesmen of the Lord, and a stated pulpit ministry did not begin until the days of John the Baptist. The Bible-school is "an agency which is the junior only of the family, and has a like stamp of God's approval with both family and pulpit." [1]

So the Sunday-school idea is not a modern one. Wendell Phillips used to have a celebrated lecture upon "The Lost Arts." The modern Sunday-school is the recovery of a

[1] Trumbull, "Teaching and Teachers," p. 354.

"lost art." Dr. Trumbull[1] has gathered together what some of the rabbis tell us of the early Bible-school among the Jews. Here we learn "that Methuselah was a teacher of the Mishna, before the flood; that, after the Deluge, Shem and Eber had a House of Instruction where the Halacha was studied; that Abraham was a student of the Torah when he was three years old, and that he was afterwards under the teaching of Melchizedek in matters concerning the priesthood; that young Jacob as a good boy did go to the Bible-school, while Esau as a bad boy did not; that among the pupils of Moses in his great Bible-school were his father-in-law Jethro, and young Joshua, and that the latter was preferred above the sons of Moses, as his successor, because of his greater zeal and fidelity in the Bible-school exercises; that the victory of Deborah and Barak reopened the schools for Bible study, which had been closed by the Canaanites; that Samuel conducted Bible-schools which were continued to the days of Elisha and beyond; that wicked King Ahaz had the Bible-schools for children closed in order to exterminate the religion of Moses; that good King Hezekiah, on the other hand, not only fostered the

[1] "Yale Lectures," p. 5.

Bible-school system, but personally bore his own children to receive instruction in one of these schools."

"All this," remarks Dr. Trumbull, "is mere fanciful tradition, it is true; but even as tradition it has an interest through what it shows of the estimation in which the Bible-school was held by the rabbis, at the time of the recording of these steadily gathering traditions concerning its ancient place and power."

When Jehoshaphat was on the throne he commissioned princes, Levites, and priests to teach the book of the law of the Lord to the people throughout all the cities of Judah. After Israel returned from exile Ezra and his corps of teachers instructed the people.

In the eighth chapter of Nehemiah we have a description of Ezra's school:

"And all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate; and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel.

"And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month.

"And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.

"And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, which they had made for the purpose; and beside him stood Mattithiah, and Shema, and Anaiah, and Urijah, and Hilkiah, and Maaseiah on his right hand; and on his left hand, Pedaiah, and Mishael, and Malchiah, and Hashum, and Hashbadana, Zechariah, and Meshullam.

"And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people (for he was above all the people); and when he opened it all the people stood up.

"And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands; and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground.

"Also Joshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiah, and the Levites, caused the people to understand the law; and the people stood in their place.

"So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading."

Edersheim tells us that the synagogue originated during or in consequence of the Captivity. The synagogue schools multiplied throughout Israel, and during the ministry of our Lord there were from 460 to 480 synagogue schools in Jerusalem alone. The schools were so influential among the Jews that it was said that "If you would destroy the Jews you must destroy the schools."

Jesus was, without doubt, taught in one of the synagogue schools at Nazareth. When He began His public career He made use of the synagogues. "And Jesus went about all Galilee, *teaching* in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom." "The synagogue became the cradle of the Church." [1]

It is well to note how *teaching* was emphasized. "And daily in the temple, and in every house they ceased not to *teach*, and preach Jesus Christ." [2] Jesus giving His commission said: "Go ye therefore and *teach* all nations . . . *teaching* them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." [3]

[1] Edersheim, "Life and Times of Jesus," Vol. I, p. 431.
[2] Acts v. 42. [3] Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

The fact that in three hundred years from the death of John Christianity spread all over the civilized world is attributed to the system of teaching. Prof. George W. Richards says: "The Middle Ages became dark ages when the schools of the Church declined." Many historians call attention to the fact that where the Bible-schools were continued, or where they were early renewed, there Christianity was preserved in its purest form, and produced its fairest flower. The Waldenses have kept up Bible training among their people for a thousand years.

The Jewish Talmud says: "Jerusalem was destroyed because the instruction of the young was neglected." Bishop Jebb declares that through all the centuries of the Christian era "in exact proportion as catechizing has been practiced or neglected, in the same proportion have the public faith and morals been seen to flourish or decline." Trumbull[1] reminds us that "The history of the Christian Church shows that just in proportion as the Church Bible-school—the Sunday-school as we now call it—has been accorded the place which our Lord assigned to it in the original plan of His Church, has substantial progress been made in the ex-

[1] "Yale Lectures," p. 66.

tending of the membership, and in the upbuilding—the edifying—of the body of Christian believers in the knowledge of God's Word and in the practice of its precepts." If history be a guide, we must not allow the teaching function of the Church to go into decline.

The modern Sunday-school movement dates from 1780, when Robert Raikes told his experience with the neglected children of Gloucester, England. Raikes tells us that pin-making had been an important industry at Gloucester from the early part of the seventeenth century. Many small children from the city and surrounding regions were employed. Vast numbers of them were uneducated and away from parental restraint and moral supervision. On Sundays the factories were closed and gross immoralities broke out among these children.

One morning Mr. Raikes went into the suburbs of Gloucester, and seeing a group of children at play, he asked a woman whether they belonged to that part of the city or not. The woman replied: "The street is filled with multitudes of these *wretches*, who, released on that day (the Sabbath) from employment, spend their time in noise and riot, playing at 'chuck,' and

cursing and swearing in a manner so horrid as to convey to any serious mind an idea of hell rather than any other place." [1]

Mr. Raikes thought it would be harmless if some little plan was formed to check what he called "This deplorable profanation of the Sabbath." He inquired of the woman if there were teachers in the neighbourhood. He was told of four women. He made an agreement to pay each of these four teachers a shilling a Sabbath to instruct in reading and church catechism the children he might send to them. "The children were to come soon after ten in the morning, and stay till twelve; they were then to go home and stay till one; and after reading a lesson they were to be conducted to church. After church they were to be employed in repeating the catechism till half-past five, and then to be dismissed, with the injunction to go home without making a noise; and by no means to play in the street." [2]

In an account given by Mr. Raikes to Colonel Townley, and published later in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, he said: "All that I require are clean hands, clean face, and the hair combed. If you have no clean shirt,

[1] Harris, "The Story of Robert Raikes," p. 47.

[2] Letter of Robert Raikes, June 5, 1784.

come in that which you have on." He characterized his work as "botanizing in human nature." The children received were from six to fourteen years of age. Only boys were admitted at first, but three years later girls were allowed to come. We learn that some of the scholars marched from their houses with logs of wood and weights tied to their legs to prevent their running away. A boy, "Winkin Jim," brought a young badger under his arms, and "let it fly" in school so as to make "Old Mother Critchley jump." [1]

At the close of three years a woman, who lived near one of the schools thus opened, said to Mr. Raikes: "The place is quite a heaven upon Sundays compared to what it used to be."

Mr. Church, a manufacturer of hemp and flax, who employed many children, when asked by Raikes if he had perceived any alteration in the poor children he employed, said: "Sir, the change could not have been more extraordinary, in my opinion, had they been transformed from the shape of wolves and tigers to that of men. In temper, disposition, and manners, they could hardly be said to differ from the brute creation. But

[1] Harris, "The Story of Robert Raikes," p. 53.

since the establishment of the Sunday-schools they have seemed anxious to show that they are not the ignorant, illiterate creatures they were before." [1]

So startling was the reformation wrought by the primitive Sunday-schools that Adam Smith said: "No plan has promised to effect a change of manner with equal ease since the days of the apostles." [2]

The queen summoned Mr. Raikes to her presence in order to hear from him "by what accident a thought which promised so much benefit to the lower order of people as the institution of the Sunday-school was suggested to his mind."

In five years Raikes' experiment was deemed a success, and God gave Robert Raikes to see some of the harvest of his faithful sowing. When he saw the direful need of something being done for the street arabs, a voice seemed to whisper to him, "Try!" Later he said: "I can never pass by the spot where the word TRY came so powerfully into my mind, without lifting up my heart and hands to heaven, in gratitude to God, for having put such a thought into my heart."

[1] Letter of Robert Raikes, June 5, 1784.

[2] Harris, "The Story of Robert Raikes," p. 129.

We have seen that the first teachers were paid teachers. This fact limited the spread and permanence of the Sunday-school for a time. A writer in the *Sunday-School Repository* says: "If we were asked whose name stood next to that of Robert Raikes in the annals of Sunday-schools, we should say the person who first came forward and voluntarily proffered his exertions, his time, and his talents to the instruction of the young and the poor; since an imitation of his example has been the great cause of the present flourishing state of these institutions, and of all that future additional increase which may be reasonably anticipated."

Previous to the movement by Raikes other men had sought the religious training of the young. Thirty years before the Sunday-school at Gloucester, John Wesley had gathered the children in various parts of England for religious instruction. "Wesley saw clearly that the child was the heir, and that to possess the child was to build the church."

In July 18, 1784, Wesley was at Bingley Church. In his journal of that date he says: "Before service I stepped into the Sunday-school, which contains 240 children, taught every Sunday by several masters, and super-

intended by the curate. . . . I find these schools springing up wherever I go. Perhaps God may have a deeper end therein than men are aware of. Who knows but some of these schools may become nurseries for Christians?" [1]

To Rev. Richard Rodda, of Chester, Wesley wrote on June 17, 1787: "My dear brother, I am glad you have taken in hand that blessed work of setting up Sunday-schools in Chester. It seems these will be one great means of reviving religion throughout the nation. I wonder Satan has not yet sent out some able champion against them." In his journal of Sunday, April 20, 1788, when at Bolton he writes: "About three (in the afternoon) I met between nine hundred and a thousand of the children belonging to our Sunday-schools. I never saw such a sight before." [2] His prophetic soul was thrilled at the prospect. On March 24, 1790, Wesley said of the Sunday-schools: "It is one of the noblest institutions which has been seen in Europe for some centuries."

Secular instruction was given in the very early Sunday-schools, because its first mission was to the illiterate, but when the public

[1] Wesley's Journal, Vol. II, p. 599.
[2] *Ibid.*, Vol. II, p. 690.

schools became more common, religious instruction came naturally into prominence.

One of the first Sunday-schools in the United States was organized by Bishop Asbury in 1786 in a private house in Hanover County, Virginia. Other Sunday-schools early appeared in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. By the end of the eighteenth century the Sunday-school was "an accepted and essential agency for any progressive church."

By 1786 there were 250,000 scholars in the Sunday-schools of England. In 1827 there were 1,250,000 in the Sunday-schools of Great Britain and America. In 1850 there were 6,000,000 in all Sunday-schools. In 1875 there were 110,000 Sunday-schools; 1,500,000 teachers; and 10,000,000 scholars. In 1911 there are over 28,000,000 officers, teachers, and scholars in the Sunday-schools of all nations. This movement is spreading throughout the world.

In the United States there are 150,455 Sunday-schools; 1,544,455 officers and teachers; 12,777,739 scholars. In our public schools in 1908 there were 466,000 teachers, and 16,000,000 pupils. There are about a million more teachers in the Sunday-schools of America than in our public schools.

The increase of Sunday-school forces in the United States from 1905 to 1908 was as follows: Schools, 15,021; teachers, 37,727; scholars, 1,439,266. This means an increase per day of over thirteen schools, thirty-four teachers, and thirteen hundred and fourteen scholars.

Let us have broader views of the possibilities of this world-wide movement. In 1905 a man said to Mr. W. N. Hartshorn, chairman of the Executive Committee for International Sunday-schools, as he thought of the meagre financial support given to the committee for their work: "Why, my dear brother, you seem to be doing a world-wide business on a 'nickel in the slot returns,' using narrow gauge, single-track equipment and power rather than the wide gauge, four-track equipment of the 'Empire State' and 'Twentieth Century Limited.'" [1] We must give the Sunday-school a chance to work out its mighty mission, and this can be done only as the Church shall place much larger gifts upon God's altar for the Sunday-school work.

2. *The Sunday-school's Mission and Power.* The Sunday-school exists for character. Its purpose is to save the scholar. This is forever its fundamental aim. Every-

[1] Report of the Toronto Convention, p. 413.

thing else is only a means to this supreme end. Its mission is the same as the Bible's, the same as Christ's. "The ultimate aim of the teaching is the knowledge of Christ, Christian experience, personal salvation." [1] The aim of Sunday-schools is "to quicken spiritual life and instinct and give knowledge and understanding of the means of spiritual growth." [2]

The Sunday-school seeks the education of the *heart.* History furnishes the names of many men who were brilliant in mind, but depraved in heart. Heart culture is better than brain culture. The heart is "centre and spring" of character. Its supremacy must be forever recognized. Dr. John has well said that "it is not simply civilization the world wants, but civilization with conscience." [3]

Culture of conscience must not be forgotten. Educated rascals are a bane to our national welfare. Adepts in treachery and crime stain the nation's fair name, and threaten our future good. Dr. M. J. McLeod [4] calls attention to the man convicted in the courts

[1] Demarest.

[2] Mariana C. Brown, "Sunday-school Movements in America," p. 178.

[3] "The Worth of a Man," p. 233.

[4] "Earthly Discords and How to Heal Them," p. 18.

of Philadelphia a few years ago, whose life of shame and crime was admitted by the police to be without a parallel in the records of the Rogue's Gallery. This criminal was a college graduate and a post-graduate at Ann Arbor. He was so clever in covering up his tracks that he baffled his pursuers for years. He was at last found guilty of arson, forgery, bigamy, and murder. He was an educated rascal.

Men rob municipalities, pillage the coffers of the nation, scandalize our civilization, and blacken the pages of history because they have cold, hard, selfish, and dwarfed hearts. In 1905 after two years of investigation, Judge Lindsey estimated that at least fifty per cent. of the boys of Denver were dishonest. "We want," says Levi Gilbert, "that our youth should know how to balance up their bank accounts; but we want to have them do it without putting a cold thousand in their pockets. We want them to know something about geography, but something more than the shortest route to Canada."[1] Wendell Phillips, in his lecture on "Public Opinion," said: "They tell us that this heart of mine, which beats so unintermittedly in the bosom, if its force could be directed against a granite

[1] Address before Toronto Convention, 1905.

pillar, would wear it to dust in the course of a man's life. You may build your capitol of granite, and pile it high as the Rocky Mountains; if it is founded on or mixed up with iniquity, the pulse of a girl will in time beat it down."

Socrates of old declared: "I do nothing but go about persuading you all, old and young alike, not to take thought for your persons, or your properties, but first and chiefly, to care about the greatest improvement of the *soul*." The care of the body is important, the training of the mind is of great moment, but the culture of the heart is supreme and crucial.

A sage said long ago, "Keep thy heart with all diligence for out of it are the issues of life." We have physical culture, intellectual culture, but heart culture is often neglected. Bushnell asserts: "The world-ward nature is cared for, but the religious, that which opens Godward, that which aspires after God, and, occupied by His inspiring impulse, mounts into all good character, as being even liberty itself; that which consummates and crowns the real greatness and future eternity of souls, is virtually ignored."[1]

Watkinson says:[2] "Rarely men think of

[1] "Christian Nurture," p. 80.

[2] "Education of the Heart," p. 52.

putting the heart to school." The imaginative, musical, and literary faculties are cultured but the heart is neglected. Thus he declares: "Every plant of the garden is cared for except the rose." To illustrate the folly of such a method he uses one of the fairy tales of botany. "The foliage of the poinsettia close around the flower has the habit of turning to a splendid scarlet, which is often wrongly regarded as the blossom itself; the actual bloom is a most insignificant thing. And, just as the leaves of this fashionable plant are rich with gorgeous, glowing colour, whilst the real flower is miserably meagre; so men laboriously train their secondary faculties even to a brilliant perfection, while the supreme organ of love and sacrifice is permitted to dwindle into insignificance." [1]

The Sunday-school seeks to develop the heart in love, and in broad, generous impulses. "The formation of the highest type of Christian character is certainly a commendable purpose in the work of the Sunday-school." [2]

Love is queen among the Christian graces, and she must be given her rightful crown. Hope may wave her golden wand and keep

[1] "Education of the Heart," p. 52.

[2] Haslett, "Pedagogical Bible-school," p. 69.

her eyes fixed on the gates of Paradise ; faith may reach her hand up through the clouds on whose bosom the lightnings flash and play and lay hold upon the pillars of the Throne; mind may seek to know the secrets of the universe in rock, and flower, and star ; wisdom may turn a deaf ear to the glittering enticements of sin, and allow the siren voices of iniquity to sing in vain ; enthusiasm may storm the bristling ramparts of enthroned sin ; patience may wait calm and tranquil amid the storm ; but love is supreme, love is queen, love is "the end of the commandment and the fulfilling of the law."

Because the Sunday-school seeks the development of the heart in love towards God and towards man it helps to secure the full-orbed life for man. Phillips Brooks once spoke of the length, and breadth, and height of the holy city as revealed by John, and then went on to say that life is like the city. Life has three dimensions. Man moves forward, he has aim, ambition. "The length of life is its onreach in some noble calling or pursuit." Life moves outward, relates itself to other lives, has breadth. "The breadth of life is its outreach towards our fellow men in helpfulness and sympathy." Life is upward, Godward. "The height of life is its upreach

towards God." Life thus relates to self, to neighbour, and to God. The complete life has three dimensions. If the life has only one dimension, relates only to self, it is narrow. If life has only two dimensions, relates to self and to men, it is shallow. It is not until life has three dimensions, not until it has onreach, outreach, and upreach that it is full-orbed, and complete.

The Sunday-school helps to develop a generation of Christians whose lives are founded upon the Word of God. It helps to make Bible Christians. What we greatly need is a church-membership whose lives are illuminated by a faithful study of the Word. This will help to banish some of the strange inconsistencies of church-members, because the Sunday-school must insist upon the application of the truth studied to the life lived. This will tend to rid the earth of such conceptions as are indicated by the following incident. A coloured man after giving a glowing testimony was asked to pay a certain debt, whereupon he remarked: "Ligun is ligun, an' bisnes' is bisnes', an' I ain't gwine to mix um." Training in the Sunday-school will help all of us to "mix um."

This knowledge of the Bible gotten in the Sunday-school arms one for the day of temp-

tation. When Christ was tempted He thrust His hand into God's armoury and brought forth the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, and gave the defeating thrust to the Adversary of His soul. The nimbleness with which Jesus handled that Sword was doubtless partially learned in the synagogue Bible-school.

Christmas Evans, the Welch preacher, tells in his unique way how the unclean spirit that was cast out could not find entrance into other hearts. He imagines that the demon passes along the highway until he sees a plowboy ready to begin his day's toil: "Ah, here is a human house, into which I will enter and live," says the evil spirit. "I will go and possess that boy. I will take the power of his youth and I will make it a power for wickedness. I will use every faculty of his in the work of advancing crime." As the evil spirit approached the lad he heard him singing the ninth verse of the 119th Psalm: "Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed thereto according to Thy word." That truth out of the book was the young man's protection. The evil spirit said: "This place is too dry for me; I cannot dwell here; there is no room for me here; I must go elsewhere."

The demon passed on until he saw a girl on her way to school. She was fair of face, graceful, beautiful. "Ah," said the evil spirit, "I will creep to her side, and I will whisper into her ear an evil thought that will set her soul on fire and turn her into a beautiful tempter. Mighty for evil will be her power. I will dwell forever in her and forever work through her." But as he drew near he perceived she had an open Bible in her hand and was trying to commit to memory the words: "Our daughters shall be as corner-stones carved after the similitude of a palace." Rebounding with a shock the evil spirit said: "There is no room for me here; the place is too dry for me; I will go elsewhere for a habitation."

Finding himself in front of the church manse, where the aged minister was dying, the evil spirit said: "Ah, I will enter into the soul of this man of God. True, my stay will be short, but I can do a most deadly work. Now is the time of the old man's weakness. I will create doubt within him. I will make him talk like a heathen and an unbeliever, and die under a cloud, and thus I will weaken the whole force of his long ministry." He entered the manse to execute his pernicious purpose. The aged minister was

saying with his last ounce of energy: "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." The evil spirit had struck another of the shields of God, and he fled away. So the study of the Bible helps to fortify us in the day of temptation.

There is what is called "arrested development" in the vegetable kingdom. The plant stops short of perfection. There is arrested development in the physical bodies of men. We have dwarfs, cripples, monstrosities. These scenes are sad. But a still sadder sight are the moral dwarfs and cripples. What pathos and tragedy in spiritual arrested development! To see a heart that once beat strong and steady in its love and devotion to God smitten with the devil of blight and reduced to a dwarfed and withered hope is indeed appalling.

All life must be fed. The plant without air, and soil, and water must die. The body must have food or it pines and shrivels. The *soul* must have nourishment or it will become dwarfed. The true diagnosis of many a soul is: "Dying from lack of food." The Bible is one of God's foods for the soul. Chrysostom went so far as to say: "Here is the

cause of all our evils, our not knowing the Scriptures." One man in the New Testament said: "Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years: take thine ease, eat, drink and be merry." But a soul cannot be fed on "goods." Jesus said: "Sanctify them by Thy truth; Thy word is truth." A church with a large per centage of its membership in the Sunday-school must grow strong.

We are to "search the Scriptures." We must "study to show ourselves approved unto God." The synagogue school was called "Beth-Midrash," or "House of Searching." Gems of celestial truth reward the earnest searcher of God's Word. Dr. Lorimer tells of the sunken forest of white cedar on the coast of New Jersey. "This mine of buried timber has been worked for more than eighty years, and has proved to be a source of wealth. Over this buried forest large trees are growing and flourishing, and these have often to be hewn away to reach the more precious logs hidden some four to five feet beneath the surface of the soil." [1] So, often as a reward of earnest searching we find precious truth in God's Word beneath the surface.

[1] "The Arguments for Christianity," p. 258.

What a sight to see the whole church at study! To behold almost infants, children, young men and maidens, adults and even the aged, all studying the revelation of God, is indeed a thrilling sight.

The Sunday-school is a mighty evangelistic agency. Dr. W. E. Hatcher says: "A crowning phase of church organization—perhaps the most powerful and far-reaching of any yet devised—is the Sunday-school. It has the Bible for its text-book, mankind for its constituency, and the sweetest hour of the Lord's day for its opportunity."

That it is a great missionary agency in new communities is evidenced by the fact that seventy per cent. of our churches were first organized as Sunday-schools. That it is a tremendous evangelistic force is proven by the estimate that eighty-five per cent. of our church-membership come directly from the Sunday-school.

The Sunday-school is the most available avenue through which to reach the unevangelized in the communities where churches already exist. When a boy on the farm, I looked after the sheep. Sometimes I would have to carry young and tender lambs from the pasture to the place of shelter. There was no trouble in getting the

mother to follow when I had the lamb. Let the Church of God get hold of the child through the Sunday-school and the mother is likely to follow, and the father may not be far away. And surely this kind of an evangelistic agency is needed when we recall the startling and astounding fact that there are eight million children in the United States to whom neither Protestant nor Roman Catholic churches minister.

How sacred is the task of seeking the children of non-Christian homes! "He who sins against a child," says Hugo, "sins against God," and if we neglect a child when we might help it are not our garments smirched?

There are children who seem "damned into the world." "Lust is their father, brutality their mother, vice their teacher, filth their companion, drunken crime their ambition, hunger their inspiration, and drunkenness their heaven." [1]

We should plant Sunday-schools in the plague spots of our cities, and help restore decency where there is now moral pollution. If our hearts are touched with divine pity we will seek for our Sunday-schools not simply the children of Christian homes, but also those of the less fortunate families.

[1] From address of Frank Crane.

Booker T. Washington tells of his first opportunity of attending a Sunday-school. He was a poor boy. When his mother died, he was thrown out as a waif upon the street. One Sunday morning a good man called to him, and said: "Sonny, I want you to go with me to Sunday-school." Washington says: "I did not know where he was leading me, but I had faith enough in him to follow, and he led me, a poor unknown negro boy, into the Sunday-school, and I have been interested in the Sunday-school ever since." [1]

One day in Philadelphia a young man went down the street into a poor section of the city, and saw a group of boys and girls. The next Sunday he started a Sunday-school among them. He says: "I was but a boy when I began the Bethany Sunday-school in what was then a very poor part of the city." [2] Twenty-seven children were present the first Sunday. Some were unwashed and their hair unkempt. The young superintendent got water and washed their faces, and combed their hair. This process was often repeated in that school. Fathers and mothers wondered what had happened to Johnny and

[1] Address, "The Religious Development of the Negro."

[2] From a letter received by the author concerning the Bethany Sunday-school.

Mary at the Sunday-school. Curiosity was aroused. The school grew. Soon some of the parents sent all the children. Out of that Sunday-school grew the present Bethany Sunday-school and church which have the largest membership in the Presbyterian denomination, if not in the world. That "boy" is still superintendent. He has a Bible class of eight hundred. He visits the sick, and he sends flowers when there is a funeral among his scholars. The world knows this prince among Christian gentlemen as John Wanamaker.

Thus the Sunday-school may prove itself a great evangelistic force, a recruiting agency for the progress of the Church.

The adult classes may be an evangelizing agency. The time is overdue when the adult membership of the church should not only be found in Bible classes, but when they should recognize the evangelistic force of a Bible class. Marion Lawrance, speaking of the work of organization in a Bible class of men, tells how the class increased. When they wanted a new member volunteers were called for, and seven were accepted, one for each day in the week. On Monday the one designated for that day made a pleasant call, and invited him to the class the next Sabbath. "He would think of it." On Tues-

day another called, and gave the invitation in his way; and without unduly pressing it, each in turn paid his respects. The one who called on Sunday morning found him yet in bed. At the class a brief report was asked from each, and then seven more volunteers called. One day the man said: "I never had so much interest taken in me in my life. I think all my friends must be in the Bible class of the Grove Street church. I'll be there next Sunday, sure!"

The Bible-school has been called "The University of Protestantism." Bishop Vincent sees in the ideal school of the future, "A College of the Book of books." [1]

Provision is now made so that people of all ages may be in some department of this school. The Sunday-school is not the children's church, nor is it a school simply for children. It is the church-school, intended for all. New-born babes are placed upon the cradle-roll, and are welcomed into the ranks of the Sunday-school host with the song:

"Another new baby we welcome to-day.
To-day a new name has been given.
We will give him a place on our dear cradle-roll,
For of such is the kingdom of heaven."

[1] From address on "A Forward Look for the Sunday-school."

For the infirm and all who are necessarily absent from the session of the school we have the Home Department. The place for all others is the school itself. Father with a wayward son, the way to keep him in the Sunday-school is to be there yourself. "Azariah did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father Amaziah had done."[1] We are all imitators, and example means much.

Of the ancient Jewish Bible-school we read: "The righteous go from the synagogue to the school," or, as we would now say: "The good man goes from the church to the Sunday-school."[2] The primary department of the Jewish school included those from six to ten years of age. The intermediate department comprised scholars from ten to fifteen. The senior department was made up of all over fifteen years old.[3] The scholar never became too old for that school, and at death he graduated into the celestial school on high. Let that ideal swing in sacred splendour before our modern Sunday-schools.

Some modern mottoes are suggestive: "All the Church in the Sunday-school; all the Sunday-school in the Church." Here is

[1] 2 Kings xv. 3.

[2] Trumbull, "Yale Lectures," p. 16. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 192

another: "Every scholar a Christian; every Christian a worker; every worker trained." We will mention still one more: "Every member present every Sunday, on time, with his own Bible, a liberal offering, a studied lesson, and a mind to learn." A church with such ideals fulfilled in her Sunday-school will become "beautiful as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, and terrible as an army with banners!"

We begin to see that the Sunday-school contains mighty possibilities for the moral and religious uplift of the nation and the race. The Sunday-school harnesses the forces of the church, it develops the teachers and those who are taught, instructing them in the message of the world's great Book. It vastly extends the kingdom of Christ in the world. It helps to bind together the nations of the earth in peace and harmony. It is a great educator of temperance and is forever laying foundations for our nation's future glory and welfare. The teaching of temperance in the Sunday-school was adopted by the convention of 1890. The boys of that time are voters now, and new impetus is coming every day to this reform. The Sunday-school is a great patriotic institution. Daniel Webster once asked Thomas Jefferson: "What is to be the salvation of our nation?" After a pause,

Jefferson replied: "Our nation will be saved, if saved at all, by teaching children to love the Saviour."

Many parents neglect the teaching of the Bible to the boys and girls growing up in the home. Then, too, the Bible has passed almost entirely from the public school. It now becomes more and more incumbent upon the Sunday-school to give instruction concerning those principles and precepts upon which the prosperity and perpetuity of the nation rests. It is certain that the Sunday-school is one of the prime factors in moulding the religious and the moral condition of our Republic. In this institution is one of the greatest forces for fashioning the future of the nation. The English statesman, John Bright, speaking of the influence of the Sunday-school upon his own nation, said: "I believe that there is no field of labour, no field of Christian benevolence, which has yielded a greater harvest to our national interests and national character than the great institution of the Sunday-school." [1] Mr. Green says in his "History of the English People" that the Sunday-schools established by Mr. Raikes at the close of the eighteenth century were the beginning of

[1] Quoted by Professor Richards in address on "An Historic View of the Sunday-school."

popular education. Mr. D. Ballantyne, speaking for Scotland at the World's Sunday-school Convention in Rome in 1907, said: "Scotland owes a large measure of its moral and religious strength to the existence of its Sunday-schools, and at no time in its history was this religious agency so wide-spread as it is now."

Dr. Trumbull claims that "America has been practically saved to Christianity and the religion of the Bible by the Sunday-school." [1] A Frenchman having studied our national life gave as his judgment that: "The Sunday-school is one of the strongest foundations of the republican institutions of the United States."

President McKinley, in a letter to the editor of the *Sunday-School Times*, said: "Every youth who is taught to observe the principles of justice and forbearance becomes an intelligent friend of the doctrine of peace, and every endeavour which aims at such instruction is deserving of the highest commendation." [2] Marion Lawrance calls the Sunday-school "the noblest development of the nineteenth century."

[1] "Yale Lectures," p. 122.

[2] Tenth International Sunday-school Convention Report, p. 95.

Tremendous are the possibilities in the Sunday-school for building the Church of the living God. The Sunday-school must extend her work into the unevangelized communities, and she must intensify it in the fields already occupied.

The aim set forth when the American Sunday-school Union was organized in 1824 must be our ideal: "To plant a Sunday-school wherever there is a population." One man in the glow of his holy enthusiasm said: "Let us make it down-hill from every direction to our Sunday-schools." And as the consecrated host of God's militant Church faces the splendid opportunities for service in the Sunday-school we seem to hear the divine word: "Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it."

II

THE TEACHER; HIS TASK; HIS EQUIPMENT; HIS POWER; AND HIS REWARD

"He who teaches the child of his fellow man shall occupy a prominent place among the saints above."—*Jewish Saying.*

"I do not believe that all the efforts men have ever made tend so much to the greatness and happiness, and to the security and true glory of this country (Scotland), as have the efforts of your Sunday-school teachers."—*John Bright.*

"I think it is Browning who tells us in one of his poems of a picture in which an angel is portrayed intently engaged in doing something. At first sight it does not clearly appear what he is doing. The angel appears chained to the spot; he is intent upon something. And when you look at it closely, by the angel's side there kneels a little child with closed eyes and uplifted hands and face; and the angel is teaching the little child to pray. The heavens are opened, and other angels are beckoning this angel to heaven. On the earth great enterprises are beckoning the angel. But he is chained to the spot; for to teach the little child to pray is better than entering the open heavens; certainly, before the time."—*E. Y. Mullins.*

II

The Teacher; His Task; His Equipment; His Power; and His Reward

TEACHING is the most ancient function of the Church, so the teacher is older than the preacher. Jesus is called "The Great *Teacher*." It is recorded that He and His apostles "went about *teaching* and preaching." In His last commission Jesus said: "Go ye therefore, and make disciples (learners) of all the nations: . . . *teaching* them to observe all things." The apostle writes: "And God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly *teachers*, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, divers kinds of tongues." [1] Thus it is seen that the teacher takes high rank in his calling; he is in a worthy succession.

One of our statesmen said not long ago: "The educational problem of this age, and every other age, is not the founding of the schoolhouse but the making of the schoolmaster." Similar words may be said con-

[1] 1 Cor. xii. 28.

cerning our Sunday-school work. The teacher is the prime factor.

1. *The Teacher's Task.* The Sunday-school teacher deals with values beyond possible estimate. He works upon a soul. He works with God upon a soul. He uses God's Word as he works with God upon a soul. He works for eternity as he uses God's Word and works with God upon a soul.

Teaching is defined as "causing another to know." The teacher then must study the fine art of true pedagogy. The scholars must be taught to *perceive* the truth, to *partake* of the truth, and then to *proclaim* the truth. Some one has said that the teacher's task is to bring the child *to* Christ, to build him up *in* Christ, and to send him out *for* Christ. It is said of Jesus: "The whole purpose of His teaching was to bring men into right relation with the divine will, to show them how to live in harmony with the divine power, and at last to unite them with the divine personality."

Bishop Vincent says of the teacher's task: "It is a great work, reaching inward even to the sacred centre of the soul's life, reaching upward even to the throne of God, reaching forward even to an endless eternity. . . . It is a work upon souls, for eternity, under divine inspection, with divine agencies, and is

dependent upon divine inspirations. . . . He is to teach the Word of God; to teach Christ through the Word; and to so teach Christ through the Word as to bring souls living in this world into vital union with the Lord." [1] Again Bishop Vincent sums up the teacher's work: (1) To see that the truth is imparted; (2) that it is so imparted that it will be received; (3) that it is so received that it will be retained; (4) that it is so retained that it will be employed for personal growth, human good, and God's glory." [2]

Sunday-school scholars need enlightenment, guidance, encouragement, and inspiration. They must have bread for the soul; chaff will not do. Poetry and similes may well illustrate and adorn the truth, but they must not be a substitute for the truth. The teacher must give food, mental and spiritual pabulum.

The teacher sows seeds and seeds grow. This is his encouragement. He sows seed in the spring time of immortal lives. He plants truth in hearts that shall grow into harvest in the golden autumn of immortality. He sows with eternity's harvest in view.

The teacher helps to train the tendrils of the heart's affections about Christ in a holy

[1] "The Modern Sunday-school," pp. 72, 159.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 166.

allegiance, and to save lives from the misery and doom of sin.

2. *The Teacher's Equipment.* What John Brown of Haddington said to his theological students may be said to the Sunday-school teachers: "Three things ye must have: piety, learning, and common sense. God will gie ye the first; I will gie ye the second; but if ye hae nae the third, the Lord hae mercy on ye."

First of all, the teacher must know God. This knowledge is not mere mental assent concerning the actuality of God, it is not simply belief in the historic personality of Jesus, but a heart-to-heart relationship, a kinship of soul with Christ, a fellowship of spirit with the Saviour brought about by a loving trust in God the Father, who sent Jesus upon His mission to save.

The teacher must have experience of the truth he teaches. "A man must himself be a Bible before he can understand God's Bible." No matter what other equipments he may possess, without this, failure is certain. With this in large degree, other qualifications may be meagre, and yet success may be achieved. Dr. Schauffler[1] records the incident of a sailor who was a teacher.

[1] "Pastoral Leadership," p. 105.

He knew little of history, and nothing of science, but was well acquainted with Christ. Every member of his class accepted Christ and made public confession. He then went to the pastor and said: "Take my class away. I am uneducated. I can't lead them any higher, but I have led them to Christ. Give me a new class that does not know Christ, and I will try to lead them to the Shepherd." The pastor gave that class to a more educated Christian, and he appointed the man a new task, and he led every member of the new class to the Saviour. The one saving element in that teacher's equipment was his personal experience. But if breadth of scholarship, grace of speech, and force of reason can accompany the personal experience of the teacher, they are not to be belittled, but earnestly coveted and consecrated for still larger service for the kingdom. We may well heed Tennyson's lines:

> "Let knowledge grow from more to more,
> But more of reverence in us dwell,
> That mind and soul, according well,
> May make one music as before."

The teacher must illustrate in life what he teaches in word, for "the teacher's life is the life of his teaching." "Character is capital."

Here is the teacher's call to translate into a living epistle the Sunday-school lesson he would teach. His work beckons him to lofty accomplishment on the plane of living.

It is a splendid achievement to be able to carve a block of marble into an image so perfect that you can almost see the muscle move, the nerve quiver, and the heart beat. It is a splendid achievement to be able to take a simple piece of music like "Home Sweet Home" and sing it with such pathos and power as to make listeners sob and weep. It is a splendid achievement to be able to so weave words together in the expression of human thought as to sway an audience like trees before a tempest. But it is a nobler achievement, a holier accomplishment, and a diviner art to adorn the Gospel in daily life, and to give the teachings of Jesus a new incarnation.

The teacher must have the touch of God upon his life, and to have this he must go alone with God. Jacob went alone with God upon the heights of Bethel, and he came forth from his solitude as a prince of Jehovah. Elijah went alone with God upon the mount, and came forth with a new torch of light in his bosom. Paul went alone with God into the desert of Arabia, and came forth with a

tongue of flame and with a heart of fire. John the Baptist went alone with God in the wilderness, and came forth as an evangelistic voice to pioneer the way for the Messiah. Luther went alone with God, and came forth as the knight-errant of the Reformation. Lincoln went alone with God amid the pelting storms of the Civil War, and came forth with tranquil heart. Washington went alone with God at Valley Forge, and came forth with the lustre of a new patriotism upon his brow, and with the breath of the Eternal upon his spirit. And thus the teacher must find divine equipment for his task.

The Sunday-school teacher must know the Bible. The divine dictum to him, as well as to the preacher, is: "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." If the teacher does not study he will get into the fog, and instead of leading his class up the clear heights of the mountain of truth he will fall with them into the ditch.

The teacher must know more than the mere mechanical facts concerning the Bible, such as the location of the various books, the geography of the land in which the Bible was written. He must find its fountains of truth, its life for the soul. He must read his Bible

not simply so many chapters per day and so many books per month. He must read it to get *life* out of it. Joseph Parker says: "Suppose a man were appointed by us to report the oratorio called the Messiah. We ask him to tell us what the oratorio is. He says, 'I have taken infinite pains with my analysis, and I can therefore tell you exactly what the oratorio is: it consists of two thousand words; musically, it consists of fifty breves, two hundred semibreves, and nearly eight hundred quavers; it has solos—soprano, bass, tenor; its choruses require thousands of voices. This is the oratorio.' That is a woodman's report; that is the oratorio by statistics."[1] What poverty of conception of that great hymn with its sweet symphonies, triumphal choruses, and hallelujah strains! Do not read the Bible like that. Get hold of its lofty themes. Let its holy message live in your heart, let its heaven-born truth burn its way to the core of your being!

If you are a teacher, you need to read the Bible so that you can rightly guide the inquiring soul. The writer recalls the facts of an incident read about fifteen years ago. A train was making its way against a blizzard on one of our northern railways. There

[1] Parker's "People's Bible—John," p. 79.

was a mother with her child on that train. She was nervous for she was afraid she might get off at the wrong station. A man in the car noticed her anxiety and assured her that he knew every station and would see that she was put off at the right place. The train stopped at the town next to the one she was destined for, and then moved on again in the storm. After a while the train stopped again and the man said to the woman: "This is your station, get out quickly." She took her child and left the car, and the train moved on. It soon stopped, and the brakeman called the name of the station at which the woman was to have gotten off. The man who had misdirected the woman rushed to the brakeman and said: "Why, you have already stopped at that town." The brakeman said: "No, there was something the matter with the engine and we stopped a few moments to repair it." "My God," exclaimed the man, "I put that woman and child off in the storm!" They went back and found the woman and her child, but the storm had cast the winding sheet of death about them. It was a terrific blunder for that man to misguide that traveller, but vastly more tragic is it to give misdirection to a soul that is travelling to the judgment. The

teacher *must* know his Bible. The teacher must know the *scholar*. He must find out the mental, social, and spiritual condition of every member of his class. He must know how to find the "point of contact." He must enter the realm of psychology, and he will find it a fascinating field for study. Eminent psychologists have rendered splendid service in this interesting and entrancing realm. This study will help the teacher to adapt himself to the mental and to the spiritual condition of the particular scholars he is called upon to teach. The laws of psychology that govern the mind have been established by the Creator, and should be most eagerly and faithfully studied by the Sunday-school teacher.

The faithful study of the psychology of the scholar will result in a clear recognition of the tremendous fact of the tendency to permanency of character, and that this law operates early in life. We have often heard the statement: "Sow an act and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny." And this sowing begins *early*.

Professor De Motte says: "Action determines structure." He means that the man who lives a good life is building it into the

very tissues of his body, and the man who lives a vicious life is building *that* into his nerve fibre, brain tissue, and muscle structure.

The structure of the moral man is likewise affected by his deeds and by his thoughts. When a person sins he is but helping to fix a kind of structure in his moral fibre that will keep him sinning. As Joseph Cook declares: "Repetition is the hammer which forges the chains of habit, and our own free choices wield the hammer."[1]

"Not reformation, but formation" demands our earnest attention more and more. Heaven does not come by chance. God is not capricious. The race is set before us, it must be run. The battle is put in array, it must be fought. The prize is held in view, it must be won. The crowns of life are not thrown out at random to the crowd, but are given to those who walk worthy of the calling of God. The moral world is no chance world. We are under the regency of law. God makes no mistakes in the bestowal of His rewards. So far as man's part in salvation is concerned, coronation depends upon consecration. Happy the life that recognizes God's claim early.

The Sunday-school teacher must be willing

[1] "Occident," p. 177.

to work. He must aspire to be at his best. He must "feel the thing he ought to be beating beneath the thing he is." He knows that head and heart must be joined in a holy alliance for the accomplishment of the task undertaken. He knows that he must "not pray for tasks equal to his powers, but for powers equal to his tasks."

A man profuse in tears, but short on thought, had the habit of addressing Sunday-schools. One day he stood before the boys and girls of a school and soon began to weep. One boy whispered to his comrade: "What's that old 'duffer' crying about?" The other boy replied: "Keep still; if you had as little to say as he has you would cry too."

Hard work is a necessity with the Sunday-school teacher. In the depths of the sea are precious jewels, but the hand of the sluggard can never gather them. In the heart of the mountains are veins of silver and threads of gold, but the hand of the lazy man can never coin them. In the prairie soil are harvests of wealth, but the indolent man can never reap them. In the avenues of trade are rich rewards, but the shiftless man can never grasp them. In the mine of knowledge are jewels of celestial thought, but the lazy man can

never bedeck his brow with such diadems. It is toil that gathers the emeralds of the sea, coins the treasures of the mountains, reaps the glowing harvests, sends pulsing commerce on its daily rounds, and draws forth the treasure from the mine of knowledge. It is toil that drives the vessel o'er the sea, points the telescope to the stars, and harnesses the quivering forces of the universe. It is toil that makes the poem charm, the harps of music ring, the canvas glow, the marble speak, and the shuttle hum. And it is patient, persistent searching that brings to the possession of the teacher many a precious jewel from God's inexhaustible mine. And we say with Carlyle: "All true labour is divine, sweat of the brow, then up to sweat of the brain, up to sweat of the heart. This includes all Kepler calculations, all Newton meditations, all sciences, all spoken epics, all acted heroisms up to that final agony of the Garden, which all men call divine."[1]

The teacher must have *patience*. The harvest often seems long in coming. A boy of ten years of age heard Wilbur Fisk speak on the subject of education, and such an impression was made upon the boy's mind that he determined that, so far as help might lie

[1] "Past and Present."

in his power, the cause of Christian education should not lack funds. That boy was Mr. Rich, who in later years gave money for the founding of Boston University. Though Dr. Fisk did not know it, Boston University started in that speech when the ten-year-old boy was impressed.

Bishop Oldham[1] tells of a boy who was taken to a meeting when seven years old. He sat on a front seat, and was uninterested until a man came into the pulpit who took down some charts. The man began to talk about foreign missions. The speaker put before the child's absorbed gaze a picture, and he saw the great circle of dead black, and in the middle of the circle there was a small white spot. The speaker then asked: "Do you know what that black circle means, and do you know what that white spot means? That black circle represents the millions who are living in the night of paganism, and that little white spot is the little handful of Christians that are to be found in pagan lands." Sixty-nine years after that night that boy who had become an old man said: "I never forgot that, and when I went home I knelt down and said the prayers my

[1] In address on "The Value of the Teaching of Foreign Missions in the Sunday-schools."

mother taught me, and then I added this on my own account, 'Oh, Lord, let me get to be a big man, and I will work to make that white spot a little larger, that there may be not so much black, and that there may be a little more white.'"

A few years ago the church in the city of Cleveland, of which that man was a member, held a great missionary convention, and over $300,000 was pledged at a single session, and the man who had been that little boy gave one-third of it. That life of splendid giving began in the boy of seven.

Jesus knew what it was to wait. Beneath the rough exterior of Peter, Jesus saw the possibility of a saint. Under the homely outer garb of John, the fisherman, Jesus saw a seraphic soul in embryo. If Jesus could see apostles in fishermen, it ought not to be hard for us to see saints, heroes, and prophets of God in the boys and girls of our Sunday-schools.

The following incident shows the reward of patience. A young woman in a town in England asked for a Sunday-school class. There was no vacancy in the corps of teachers, but she was told that if she wanted to gather up a class of boys from the street and from neglected homes she could have a place

to teach them. A number of poor, ragged fellows were brought together, among them one wretched looking lad called Bob.

The superintendent soon invited the class to his home, and each boy received a new suit of clothes. Bob attended the school for two or three weeks and then dropped out. His suit was ruined, but the generosity and faith of the superintendent supplied another suit. That second suit soon shared the same fate. The teacher lost heart and decided to give him up. But the superintendent said: "Please don't do that; I am sure there is something good in Bob. Try him once more. I'll give him a third suit of clothes if he'll promise to attend Sunday-school." Bob's waywardness had met more than a match in that superintendent. Bob was soon a changed boy. He became an earnest seeker after truth. He joined the church and soon took a class himself. He later studied for the ministry. The world knows Bob now as Dr. Robert Morrison, who became the founder of Protestant missions in China, and translated the Bible for one-quarter of the human race. Patience won, and had its reward.

The teacher must have *enthusiasm* for his work. There are facts enough to create this

enthusiasm. You are a builder of civilization if you are training a child. Let the teacher remember that "childhood is the battle-ground of the kingdom." Let him recall the words of Dr. Goodell: "He who builds the church of Christ must save the children. If we save the children we save the world. The world is most easily and effectively saved in childhood. Life and death are in the training of children." [1]

Leschetiszky, the teacher of Paderewski, is said never to be satisfied until a pupil has expressed "all the sentiment, colour, warmth, vigour, and fire of his nature in his execution." He will say to a student: "Your fingers run over the keys and say nothing. They are like icicles. Fill them with love, with sympathy!" The teacher must fill his task with love, with sympathy, with enthusiasm.

You see the *botanist* fall in love with his science. He visits the flowers in their bloom, and looks upon their gentle beauty, so soft and delicate, that these perfumed thoughts of God might well be the work of angel fingers. Whether he is on the wild mountain or in the fruitful valley, on the lowly plain or on the storm-swept hills, in northern climes or under sultry suns, in his own home-yard or

[1] "How to Build a Church."

by a distant shore, his eye is attentive to nature's charms for he is in love with botany.

Here is the *geologist* enamoured of his work. He delves through the crust of the earth, reading the hieroglyphics of God on the rocks, and the fossil leaves become tongues of flame, telling the story of a storm-swept world. Thus he goes down from stratum to stratum, descending the ladder of creation, and as he beholds the sepulchre of the ages his heart throbs and thrills, for he is in love with geology.

The *astronomer* is charmed with his matchless science. It enamours his heart and brain. His study unfolds the beauties and wonders of creation before his enraptured gaze. With enchanted soul he labours on far into the night, and while others sleep he follows his chosen science on the highways of creation until the sun with his diamond chariot unbars the gates of the east and puts out the star-candles of the night. He is in love with astronomy.

The *musician* becomes enthusiastic as the fair Maid of Music charms his heart and enlists his powers. He gives his life in full and sacred devotion to her. Years pass. At last he is before an expectant multitude. They will not be disappointed, for music is in his

soul. The fibres of his being are attuned to the laws of harmony. He begins to play. The accordant notes float out in waves of rippling music. The sweet cadence changes to solemn strains, the solemn strains to sweeping melody, the sweeping melody becomes a tide of harmony, and the performance closes amid the thrilling raptures that almost stop the tide of life. Why? Because the man is in love with music.

Oh, Sunday-school teacher! get in love with your work. To work with God upon a human soul is the divinest of tasks. If the botanist can spend a life with eager zeal in the study of the flowers; if the geologist can have his soul set on fire as he reads the record in the rocks; if the astronomer can have his heart grow hot as he follows in the paths of the stars, and weighs worlds in the balances of his thought; if the musician can become so enamoured of his work that he will labour long and hard at his task; what shall we say of the holy zeal that should possess the soul of the teacher who deals with immortal spirits? He who seeks to lift before the scholar the noblest ideals and to fill the heart with the purest hopes, and to help him seek the divinest truth, and to fill his life with a triumphant song, and to fashion

the soul for eternal life, must have his heart melt in mercy, beat with compassion, and glow with sublime enthusiasm. "The work is great; the time is short; the Master is urgent."

3. *The Teacher's Power.* Ideals determine destiny. They mould the destiny of nations as well as of individuals. The Israelites of old dwelt upon the rugged highlands, while their Philistine neighbours lived on the more fertile lowlands by the sea. The Hebrews had little traffic with the outlying nations, but their neighbours eagerly sought commerce with other lands. Israel's isolation amid the rocks and barren hills enabled her to keep, to a remarkable degree, the ideals of God in her heart. She was not always true to them, but her prophets kept those ideals swinging before her gaze, and the holy fires did not go out entirely upon her altars. Her neighbours have left little trace in history, but that Hebrew civilization influences the nations, and throbs in our modern life. This is a result of a difference in ideals kept before those nations.

The ideals we hold before the young fashion character. Parents are the first priests of God to the child, but alas! how many forfeit the holy opportunity, and some Sunday-

school teacher becomes the real priest of God to many a youth.

The teacher moulds the life of the scholar because he comes to believe in the teacher; the teacher becomes an ideal. Faith is the medium through which personal influence can operate. The man in whom you have no confidence does not mould you. It is the man whom you trust who dominates you, and binds you to his ideals. Here is a man whose hands you know are stained with sin, his thoughts are unclean, his heart is corrupt. He does not mould your character, he does not fashion your life, he does not control your thought. You have no faith in him. But here is another man whose hands are clean. His feet walk in the way of virtue, his head is in the light, his heart is true, his purposes are pure, his life is radiant. You believe in him and hence he helps to mould you, and draws you towards his ideals. You surrender to him because you believe in him.

The author of "The World Beautiful" says: "It is a law of science that sound cannot travel through a vacuum; the sound waves require the atmospheric conditions for their vibration; and this may serve as an analogy that through the spiritual vacuum made by unfaith no divine aid can come." And in our

relation to one another faith is a necessary medium through which personal influence and moulding power may be communicated.

With a true Sunday-school teacher this medium of faith and confidence becomes a reality. Scholars come to look upon the teacher as an ideal. At the Tenth International Sunday-school Convention held at Denver in 1902, one speaker told of a young woman who was very successful as the teacher of a class of thirty young men. One day this teacher asked each member of her class to write upon a slip of paper one reason why he came to Sunday-school. Many of the answers received are very suggestive and speak to us of the mighty moulding power that is wielded by the loyal and consecrated Sunday-school teacher. Here are some of the answers she received:

"You have faith in young men."

"You are interested in us, and in what we do."

"We know you will be at Sunday-school."

"You know us on the street."

"We believe in your prayers."

"You welcome us to your home."

"You understand young men."

"We know you are a Christian."

"You always come prepared."

"You don't think we are all bad."

"You live as you teach."

Those young men believed in that teacher, and their faith in her became a medium through which a moulding power could be transmitted. The very fact that they came to have faith in her gave her power to fashion their lives. This influence one life may exert upon another gives solemnity and royalty to life. The teacher's nobility of character helps to fashion the scholar's life. We are slow to estimate the full charm of goodness, and its kingly influence upon human lives.

When Cambridge University of England sought a Professor of Sanscrit a few years ago there were but two candidates. These were Edward B. Cowell and a German. The one who relates the incident says that the German had no special reputation in England. Cowell knew the German quite well and sounded his praises, declaring him to be eminently fitted for the place. But Cowell was selected. The Mohammedan court interpreter to England was so impressed with the noble character of Cowell that he said: "The fact that Professor Cowell is a Christian makes it seem probable that Christianity is true." That was the tribute the Mohammedan paid to goodness.

Test many of the great names in history with the measuring line of goodness and alas! how soon they sink into the realm of dwarfdom, and humble ones leap into splendour. Try this test and Alexander is pulled from his pedestal and humble Dorcas mounts the throne; Nebuchadnezzar retires into the shadow and heroic Daniel assumes the crown; Herod fades and shrivels and John the Baptist steps forth with the tread of a king; the vain pomp and glory of men are eclipsed, while humble devoted goodness appears like a crowned seraph and a singing angel. Oh, teacher! you mould by the power of goodness.

The teacher moulds the scholar by his friendship and love. No one can worthily sing the lyric of friendship. In the friendship of Jonathan, the prince, and of David, the shepherd boy, we see a heart affinity, a marriage of souls. In the divine glow of that holy friendship Jonathan forgot that he was heir to the throne. When David received the homage of the people no jealousy kindled in Jonathan's bosom. David's kingly heart responded to Jonathan's princely soul. The king's son was ready to exalt the shepherd boy to the throne. Here is the power of human friendship at its noontide. And in

the friendship between the teacher and the members of his class there may be a heavenly charm that will make the teacher's work a holy task and freight it with moulding power.

In a mission school where sacred friendship had sprung up between teacher and scholar when a poor little girl of one of the classes was told that she could not live long, she said tenderly: "Mother, don't tell my teacher I am dead; for it will break her heart to know it."

No one can measure the power of love in life. You remember the infernal conspiracy that was planned for the destruction of Dreyfus. You know how he was taken four thousand miles away from home and put on Devil's Island. There under a tropical sun he suffered. The heat was intense. It was one hundred and thirty degrees in the shade. He was shut up in a pen. He could see but a small patch of sky. No grand vision even of the heavens was afforded him. He slept on a hard cot. The cot swarmed with vermin. He was told that his wife had become untrue to him, that his children had deserted him, and that his friends had forsaken him. After his release when asked what it was that sustained him amid the withering storm he

said: "I knew that four thousand miles away there was a little woman who loved me." May the teacher know that through friendship, and sympathy, and love for his scholars he may bring constant inspiration into their lives.

The teacher often moulds a life through the avenue of memory. The awakening power of memory is an asset in the moral world. Dr. J. G. K. McClure relates how a man of eighty years of age was lying one summer day beneath a tree. It was Sunday. As he lay there a bee flew among the clover and began its buzzing. This attracted his attention. As he listened to it the memory of a day more than sixty years in the past came back to him. He remembered how the bees buzzed in the churchyard when he was a boy. He remembered how they buzzed on a special day when a friend sat down beside him among the clover and asked him to be true to his highest ideals of life, and how he trifled with conscience that day and was disloyal to it. He was a youth in England then, and now he is an old man in America. But as memory called up the past, and he heard again the earnest words of his friend, those words came to him with great force, and lying there beneath the tree he yielded

to their influence and consecrated himself to all those words sought. A newly awakened memory stirred the soul of that man and brought him to a decision for Christ.

I see in vision a young man who has gone away from home and early companions. He has strayed into forbidden paths. One night he is out on the lonely plains. His companion sickens and dies. He is left alone. A chill smites his heart. He looks up at the silent stars. Memory awakes. More swiftly than run the shuttles of the loom does his mind travel across half a continent back to other scenes and to other days. The memory of the distant past burns like a coal of fire in his soul. He sees again the home where his pillow at night was as soft as love could make it, and where his mother's kisses hung like jewels upon his cheek. Then memory leads him into the Sunday-school where a faithful teacher pointed to the way of Life, and the words of Scripture he learned in that Sunday-school come to mind: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And he hears again the heart-yearn-

ing appeal of the Sunday-school teacher that he give his heart to Christ. And there where only the stars look down, and with the hush of the Eternal upon his spirit he sobs out his prayer: "God be meriful to me a sinner." Thus the memory of a faithful teacher helps to bring him to God. The bread cast upon the waters has been found after many days. The seed sown, possibly amid weeping, brings forth a joyful harvest.

A sainted missionary thinking of his work said: "I would not exchange my place for a throne." Oh, Sunday-school teacher! repine not, stay at your task, for you are a priest of God, and by your moulding influence upon young life you build for God and eternity.

4. *The Teacher's Reward.* We often hear of the problems, of the tasks, of the trials, and of the discouragements of the Sunday-school teacher. We would now say a word concerning his reward.

(1) *The development of the teacher's own life.* One may congratulate himself when he escapes taking a class in the Sunday-school. But it is no occasion for congratulation, because he has allowed to pass a rare opportunity for his own highest development. The church had been likened unto a "box of unlighted candles," and when a person who

has ability to teach turns away from the opportunity, or shirks the responsibility, his life is like the "unlighted candle."

Because man has not answered the call to use his powers, how many a carpenter's hammer has never swung, how many a forge has never glowed, how many a weaver's shuttle has never hummed, how many a field has never been tilled, how many a pulpit has never rung out with its sacred eloquence, how many an artist has never painted a picture, how many a sculptor has never lifted a chisel, how many a poet has never sung the song of his soul, and how many a Sunday-school class has gone teacherless because the power lodged within human hearts and brains has not been perfectly consecrated to God and to His service! Carlyle says: "For a man to die who might have been wise and was not; this, I call a tragedy." For one to have the gift and the opportunity for teaching, and then refuse to teach is pathetic beyond the compass of words to express.

The reward of self-development comes to the teacher through several channels. He must study the child, he must know whom he is to teach. This leads him into the realm of psychology. New fields of knowledge

open before the progressive teacher. In his eagerness for preparation for his class there comes the expansion of his own thought-life.

The teacher must know *how* to teach. We have noted in a previous chapter that teaching is "causing another to know," so the teacher must study this fine art. He must know how to prepare a lesson, how to find "the point of contact," how to hold the attention, and how to impress the truth of the lesson upon the heart and mind of the scholar.

The teacher must know *what* to teach, and this leads him into a discriminative and appreciative study of the Bible. There is no limit to the wealth that may come to him from this wondrous mine.

The teacher learns that he must illustrate in his life what he teaches, for "the teacher's life is the life of his teaching." Here is his call to translate into a living epistle the Sunday-school lesson he would teach. Thus his work beckons him to lofty accomplishment on the plane of living. The call to the heights in adorning the Gospel by his life is a portion of the teacher's reward.

(2) *To see the development of the scholar* is a part of the teacher's reward. If the greatest work of life is to grow a soul, then

to see a soul expand and reach out and up after truth must be a thrilling sight to any true teacher.

The growth of a tree is full of interest. We see the acorn thrust into the earth. It is instinct with life; it is packed power. Nature whispers to its heart. Its embryo quickens. What vital energy is there! It bursts its confining walls. Spring rains and summer suns coax it upward. Through the crust of the earth it comes. It begins its life-battle. Its leaves spread to catch the dews of heaven. Its rootlets delve into the earth and search for food. It feeds, absorbs, assimilates, and grows. It is trampled upon. The winds cuff it, but it gathers strength. A century passes. Its roots are anchored in the soil and in the clefts of the rock. The superstructure is a giant. Its strong arms sway to and fro on the bosom of the wind. It tosses its kingly head from side to side when in the grip of the storm and buffeted by the blast. The winds of God make music in its branches like Æolian harps. But the interest in the growth of a tree is poor and paltry indeed in comparison to the interest in the development of a human soul.

If the sculptor's heart throbs with joy as he sees the image come forth to perfection of

symmetry and grace; if the painter's soul burns with zeal as his picture is developed; then surely the teacher's spirit may glow with holy rapture as he sees the tendrils of the soul reach up and begin to cling to God.

This reward of seeing the development of the scholar may not come largely during the period of the teaching. The teacher must sometimes wait long years before the crown of reward is received.

Dr. H. Clay Trumbull tells how one of his Sunday-school teachers near the close of the lesson period would lay his hand tenderly on a boy and say: "My dear boy, I do wish you would love Jesus and give Him your whole heart." [1] The years sped away, but Dr. Trumbull declares that the influence of that persistent pleader remained fresh and potent.

(3) Another source of reward is *the gratitude of the scholars.* Ask people in a public meeting what influence they consider was the most potent in leading them to Christ, and the meeting will not progress far before some one will arise to bless the name and memory of a faithful Sunday-school teacher. It is well for the teacher to be aware of this appreciation, for it nerves the arm and quick-

[1] "Teaching and Teachers," p. 254.

ens the pulse to know that your devotion will not be forgotten.

A mother came to the teacher of her little boy and said: "John was playing on the floor this afternoon, and all at once he stopped and watched me, and then said: 'Mama, I wish you were as much like Jesus as my teacher is.'" [1]

You have seen the sun moving on in his meridian strength, whispering to the seeds, and summoning nature to an abundant harvest, and bathing the world in splendour; but there is no light on land or sea like the glow that beams in the face of one you have blessed and cheered. You have seen emerald jewels from the sea, and sparkling diamonds that flashed on the neck of beauty, but you never saw any jewels half so rich and rare as the tear-jewels of gratitude that trickled down the cheeks of those you led in the way of peace. You have seen flowers fresh with the breath of summer and wet with the dews of morn, but you never saw any flowers so beautiful as the roses that bloomed upon the cheeks of orphans you made sing for joy. Gratitude is a part of the reward of the teacher.

[1] Antoinette Abernethy Lamoreaux, "The Unfolding Life," p. 94.

Real service to the world is receiving recognition as never before. The ancients may deify the man who could turn a river out of its course or slay a hydra-headed monster; Greece may crown the wrestler and the charioteer; old-time chivalry may laurel the grim ruler who could enslave an empire; but we are coming to honour people who serve humanity. For almost one hundred years Napoleon has stood first in the lists of the honoured of France, but recently a new list of noble Frenchmen was made, and Pasteur was at the top. We honour the artist who gives us a beautiful and suggestive picture, rather than an Alexander who rears new dynasties amid the fragments of oriental empires. We laud the sculptor who summons the angel from the block of marble, rather than the man who crushes his foes by force of arms. We praise the man who sings the songs of freedom, rather than a Hannibal who scales the Alps and rushes down their icy slopes to knock at the gates of Rome. We exalt the man who heralds a great reform and quenches with his shield of faith the fire-tipped darts of opposition, rather than a Napoleon who rocks thrones and empires. And we do well to honour the teachers who allow large drafts upon mind and heart for

the welfare of others, and whom the Jews two thousand years ago called: "the true guardians of the city."

(4) But more than the rewards already enumerated is the reward of *divine approval.* The measure of your service is the measure of your reward. Better be the humblest worker in the vineyard of humanity than the most magnetic leader who cares naught for the happiness of mankind. Better be a Dorcas labouring with needle and thread to clothe the orphans and the poor, than the richest queen whose heart is far removed from sympathy and tears. Better be a Florence Nightingale ministering to the sick, than a golden-mouthed orator whose words blast rather than brighten the eternal hopes of man. Better be a Shaftesbury sheltering the outcast waifs, or a Ruskin with your heart upon the altar of humanity, than an absolute king upon a throne of gold. Better dry the tears of sorrow, hush the cry of pain, and lessen the miseries of mankind than wield a rod of iron. Better be a humble teacher in the Sunday-school training the tendrils of the heart to twine about God and our redeeming Lord, than cause thrones to collapse by the waving of a selfish sceptre.

The divine Master said: "He that would

be greatest, let him be servant of all." In the light of this dictum, Moses is greater than Pharaoh, Elijah than Ahab, John the Baptist than Herod, Paul than Nero, Savonarola than Lorenzo, Jenner than George III, Lincoln than Rothschild, and Christ the servant than Crœsus the king.

Selfishness shrivels the soul. This is God's law. A few years ago the writer visited the ruins of Pompeii. In the museum close by are many bodies that have been taken from the ruins of the buried city. One skeleton was found with the fingers clutched about a quantity of gold. Think of the madness of the man trusting in gold on that awful day, when the light melted out of the sky, when deep and massy clouds hung over Vesuvius, when fiend-like flames leaped from the volcano's crater, when the gloomy caverns groaned, when the rumbling sounds echoed in the hidden clefts of the rock, when vegetation shrivelled under the consuming breath of heated, foul and vaporous air, when the agents of terror and death were omnipresent, when hope perished and despair revelled and reigned, when the mountain, roused like a giant from the sleep of years, rocked, and quivered, and reeled, when fiery cataracts and demon floods leaped onward, when avalanches

of fire steamed, and smoked, and writhed, and went hissing into the sea, and the groaning waves rolled back their lava-scorched lips, when all the horrors of ghastly night, and of more ghastly death rushed on the noon, yet even then, this man in his madness trusted in glittering gold, gone mad over money, insane through selfishness.

There is a gentle voice that calls a man away from a life of selfishness to a life of service. That voice often comes as gently as the raindrops fall upon a summer sea, as softly as the light kisses the petals of the rose. It calls the heart out in new aspirations and aims as gently as nature summons the flower from the seed, or the oak from its acorn cup. This appeal for one to enter the life of helpfulness and service acts as gently as the sunbeam falls upon the iceberg's frozen heart, as deftly as gravitation acts on matter. Man in his selfishness is chained to the earth, he is fettered to a poor, narrow, grovelling life. But this call to service summons man to a higher place of outlook, to a grander view of life and of the world. If he heeds the call, his eye will flash with new fire. With new pinions of hope and faith he will mount to a higher sphere and to a freer realm. The chains that once fettered him to the sordid,

selfish life will be shattered, and he will rise to a clearer vision of the mountain peaks of eternal truth. Happy, thrice happy the person whom God deems worthy to be called to service in the Sunday-school.

England has her Westminster Abbey, where many of her sons of fame are buried. The United States has her Hall of Fame. And we must not forget that God has His list of immortals, of whom He says: "And the teachers [1] shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever."

[1] Daniel xii. 3, marginal reading.

III

THE SCHOLAR WE TEACH

"And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children."—*Isaiah.*

"For me increasingly the call of the child is the call of the ascended Christ to my heart."—*G. Campbell Morgan.*

"There are some of us eighty years old, who were made disciples to Christ in our childhood."—*Justin Martyr.*

"The Church of Christ will be wise when it takes every representative of the new generation at the rating which our work gives him, confirms his native faith, tells him that now he must in childish ways do the will of the blessed Master, and leads him on and up until the impulsive outgoings of the young heart are changed into deliberate convictions, and fixed purposes to belong to Christ forever and forever."—*Bishop Hughes.*

III

The Scholar We Teach

LIFE begins with the sweet dawn of babyhood. Soon the eyes look out in wonderment. The hand is outstretched to grasp the unknown. The babe is a bundle of wonders; it is a gem celestial. What coils of strength, what potentiality are infolded there! What mental majesty, what moral beauty, what spiritual glory are the possible issues of this flash of life from God! Tennyson sings:[1]

"The baby new to earth and sky,
What time his tender palm is prest
Against the circle of the breast,
Has never thought that 'this is I':

"But as he grows he gathers much,
And learns the use of 'I' and 'me,'
And finds 'I am not what I see,
And other than the things I touch.'

"So rounds he to a separate mind
From whence clear memory may begin,
As through the frame that binds him in
His isolation grows defined."

[1] "In Memoriam," Section XLV.

The problem that interests both church and state is the problem of the child. The church that cares best for the children will be, and ought to be, the church of the future. The child is rightly called "the battle-ground of the kingdom." The infinite sacredness of childhood must be profoundly impressed upon us. When a teacher approaches a child he draws nigh "the holiest temple of God."

We sing of the children:

> "Fresh from the kingdom of heaven
> Into this earth-life they come
> Not to abide; we must guide them
> Back to the heavenly home."

Victor Hugo said: "The sublimest song to be heard on earth is the lisping of the human soul on the lips of children." The English bard sings: "Heaven lies about us in our infancy."

Men tell us that if we want to take the world for Christ, we must spend our missionary money and efforts upon the dominant and conquering races. If there be any wisdom in that sentiment, then much more readily should we see the wisdom in the Church spending her energy upon the young who will be leaders and moulders of society

to-morrow. Charles E. Jefferson says: "With all her follies and crimson stains, Rome goes on her conquering way because she knows the value of a child."

Christianity alone, of all the religions of the earth, glorifies childhood. Ruskin called attention to the fact that there are no children in Greek art, but whoever has looked upon the masterpieces of Christian art knows how childhood is honoured and glorified. Jesus put a child in the midst, and the church that would take the world must keep that little child where Jesus put him. Cardinal Manning said: "Give me the children and England shall be Catholic in twenty years." Let the Church train and nurture the children and she will find her shortest and surest way to the redemption of the world. The child is the key to the problem of world evangelization. Childhood is the strategic time in which to win trophies for the King. And when we earnestly seek the children for the Saviour we are very near to the spirit of Christ as revealed in His attitude towards the children.

Childhood is susceptible to the appeal of the Saviour's love. You say: "The child cannot understand the plan of salvation; I do not believe in child-religion." We reply in

the words of A. H. McKinney: "I would rather try to teach sublime religious truths to a child of six than to an adult of forty-six."[1] The child's heart has not been hardened by disobedience; its conscience has not been seared by sin. We may be reminded of the words of Dr. Edward Judson: "It is sometimes said that even a child can be converted; it should be said that even a *grown* person can be. The nearer the cradle, as a rule, the nearer Christ."[2] How urgent the Bible is concerning the religious nurture of the young! "Train up a child in the way he should go."[3] "Bring them (the children) up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."[4] "Feed My lambs."[5] Does the Church heed these words adequately? Spurgeon said there were certain preachers who acted as if the Lord had not said: "Feed My lambs," but: "Feed My giraffes," because they put the food so high up that the lambs could not get near it.

The child should be taught from infancy that he belongs to God, not to Satan. What blighting heresy to teach him that he must

[1] "The Teacher, the Child and the Book," p. 158.

[2] Quoted by Pattison in "Ministry of the Sunday-school," p. 36.

[3] Prov. xxii. 6. [4] Eph. vi. 4. [5] John xxi. 15.

serve an apprenticeship under the tutelage of the devil before he can be God's child! The Prodigal Son did not take the best course when he went into riot, and degradation, and shame, and close to the brink of ruin before he came into filial and obedient relationship with his father. Bushnell well asks: "Who can think it necessary that the plastic nature of childhood must first be hardened into stone, and stiffened into enmity towards God and all duty, before it can become a candidate for Christian character?"[1] You ask: "What becomes of the doctrine of the necessity of the new birth?" What we have said does not deny the necessity of regeneration. But we must remember that the "initiating touch of grace" may be given very early. The earlier the moral choice is made for Christ the better, and why should not the child be led "in his *first* moral act to cleave to what is good and right" as well as in any later act? Why not most urgently seek to have the child choose Christ from the very dawn of moral choice, rather than at some later hour in life's day? Bishop McCabe was converted at the age of eight, and Matthew Henry at seven. None of us can remember when we learned the alphabet, but we know

[1] "Christian Nurture," p. 22.

that we learned it some time. So there are those who do not recall when they first responded to the wooing of God's Spirit; it is back beyond the field of memory.

When a child is trained from infancy for God there will likely come early a deliberate and fixed purpose to be Christ's follower forever. As G. Campbell Morgan says: "There will come a moment, known as adolescence, when will begins to work; and the child will say, yes, I am His, and then, sweet and gentle as the kiss of the morning on the hill, as the distilling of the dew on the herb, the child will pass into personal relations with Jesus Christ." [1]

In conference love-feasts Bishop Foster gave as his testimony: "I know nothing about conversion experimentally in the technical sense of that term. As far back as memory goes I remember loving the Saviour and of having the sweet, childish consciousness that the Saviour loved me." Jesus indicates that childhood is the time to come to Him when He says: "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto Me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." [2] And long before Jesus said this, it was written:

[1] From address on "The Claim of the Child."

[2] Matt. xix. 14.

"Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth."[1] God called Samuel when a child.[2] Josiah was but a youth when he began to seek after the God of David his father.[3]

Dr. A. F. Shauffler[4] tells of a minister, who upon hearing the scholars of the primary class called "the little lambs," said: "Don't call them little lambs; call them little wolves." Dr. Schauffler goes on to say: "Was he right or was he wrong? It rather jars upon our conventional conception of these little ones. Are they lambs or are they wolves? This much is certain: All the wolves of to-day were once little children. All the jail-house occupants of to-day were once prattling little ones. This much is also certain: All the great saints of to-day were once primary scholars. Wolves, or lambs, are they? Neither exactly. Possible wolves? Yes. Possible lambs? Yes. There is the potentiality of the wolf in the child, and there is the potentiality of the lamb in the child. There is a possible demon in the child, and there is a possible saint in the child. So that when we face the little ones as well as the older ones, we are facing boundless pos-

[1] Eccl. xii. 1. [2] 1 Sam. iii. 19. [3] 2 Chron. xxxiv. 3.
[4] "Pastoral Leadership of Sunday-school Forces," p. 94.

sibilities upward and boundless possibilities downward." "The soul waits at the point of its magnificent infancy, to be led into the choices, tastes, affinities, and habits that are to be the character of its eternity." [1]

Specialists of child psychology, and students of the nature and phenomena of child life may prove valuable helpers to teachers in our Sunday-schools.

Haslett [2] divides the life of the individual as follows:

"1. Infancy—birth to the third year.

"2. Childhood—third year to about the twelfth year.

"3. Puberty—eleven or twelve to fifteen.

"4. Adolescence—about twelve to twenty-five."

Or again:

"1. Body or physical—birth to one and a half or two years.

"2. Senses—about two to eight or nine.

"3. Judgment and memory—eight or nine to about fourteen.

"4. Imagination—fourteen to about eighteen.

"5. Reason and volition—eighteen to about thirty or later.

[1] Bushnell, "Christian Nurture," p. 72.

[2] "Pedagogical Bible-school," p. 94.

"6. Reflection and sentiments—thirty to about sixty-five.

"7. Reminiscence—sixty-five and later."

During the first five or six years the life of the child is especially self-centred. In this period the child thinks only of its own pleasures and pains. One amazing thing to the writer is how a certain little sister cares so little for a brother when he is in trouble. Her doll and her doll's clothes are of more concern than her little brother's distress.

From five or six to eleven or twelve the social element becomes a factor. Boys and girls play together. The thought of self as the centre abides, but not so prominently as before. Curiosity is aroused and the mind teems with questions. The child is imitative now and submissive, and the habits of reverence, prayer and worship can be established.

In these years the contents of a boy's pockets reveal an amazing variety of objects. His hair shows the marks of a comb only in front. On his wrists is seen "the rim of high water mark." The sheets of his bed tell too often that he crept into bed with unwashed feet. He slams the door, kicks the table, walks in the mud and water, rather than on the sidewalk, and his mother by a narrow margin escapes nervous prostration.

But we are still more interested in the period of *adolescence* which extends from about twelve to twenty-five with boys, and from about eleven to twenty-two with girls. This period is sometimes divided as follows: Early adolescence, twelve to sixteen; middle adolescence, sixteen to eighteen; later adolescence, eighteen to twenty-five. In the early years of this period there is the growth of the physical. The muscles, bones, and heart especially develop.

In this first period of adolescence the boys are awkward and crude. They laugh boisterously, and talk loudly. Blood and thunder are in their conversation. Team games, as baseball, football, and tug-of-war enlist their interest. The group is larger than the individual, and the boy will work for the good of the team. The girls are bashful and sensitive. They are apt to giggle on slight provocation. Though little more than a child you must not designate one in early adolescence as a "child." Better not call a boy of this age a "kid" if you want to retain your grip upon him. "Any attempt," says one, "to treat a child at adolescence as an inferior is instantly fatal to good discipline." Criticism crushes, and encouragement inspires. Great loss comes to

the Church and Sunday-school in these years.

In the earlier years of adolescence the sexes fly apart. The boys are called "horrid" and the girls are called "sissy." A little later the boys seek the company of the girls. Charlie waits for Annie to see her home.

Boys are said to be most susceptible to influence for good or evil from twelve to nineteen, with the climax at sixteen; girls are most susceptible from eleven to seventeen, with the climax at fourteen. One student has found that the greatest number of spiritual awakenings and commitments to the Christian life came from twelve to sixteen.

These years of adolescence are among the most potential of life. There are no other years fraught with such fateful destiny. This period has been called "the holy place of opportunity" for the parent and for the teacher. The fact that crucial choices are made very often that determine character for eternity gives gravity to the delicate task of parents and teacher. Happy is the guide who is in close intimacy with the child and has the child's sacred confidence when life's crisis is at hand.

The tables of immortality prepared by Starbuck, Coe, Gulick and others ought to work conviction in our hearts concerning early conversion. What solemn truth they bring us! Professor Starbuck found that of 526 officers of the Young Men's Christian Associations in the United States and the British Provinces the average age of conversion was about sixteen and five-tenths years.[1]

Out of 254 men he found that eighty-three per cent. were converted between the ages of ten and twenty, distributed as follows: three per cent. at the age of ten, three per cent. at the age of eleven, five per cent. at the age of twelve, four per cent. at the age of thirteen, nine per cent. at the age of fourteen, twelve per cent. at the age of fifteen, thirteen per cent. at the age of sixteen, eleven per cent. at the age of seventeen, ten per cent. at the age of eighteen, nine per cent. at the age of nineteen, and four per cent. at the age of twenty.[2]

Professor Coe's study of the 272 members of the Rock River Conference reveals that the average age of conversion was sixteen and five-tenths years. He gives the average

[1] Quoted by Professor Coe in the "Spiritual Life," p. 40.
[2] "The Psychology of Religion," p. 29.

age of conversion of 1,784 men as sixteen and four-tenths years.[1]

Dr. A. B. Van Ormer who had access to the obituary notices for the *Christian Advocate* of New York says: "There were 2,276 available memoirs of men and 2,542 of women. The memoirs cover all the decades of the nineteenth century, with the varying conditions of religious interest that occurred during the century. . . . More than twelve per cent. of all the spiritual awakenings of men occurred before or at twelve years of age; of women more than sixteen per cent. occurred before or at twelve years of age. In the favourable home influence cases more than twenty-one per cent. of the men made their public confession before or at twelve years of age; of the women more than thirty-seven per cent." [2]

Marion Lawrance asserts that probably over ninety per cent. of the conversions occur prior to the eighteenth year.[3] Any teacher may well tremble when he sees a scholar slip out of the teens without becoming a Christian.

Starbuck says: "Conversion does not oc-

[1] "The Spiritual Life," pp. 43, 45.

[2] Address: "The Age of Spiritual Awakening."

[3] General Report, 1908, International Convention.

cur with the same frequency at all periods of life. It belongs almost exclusively to years between ten and twenty-five. The number of instances outside that range appear few and scattered. That is, conversion is a distinctively adolescent phenomenon. It is a singular fact also that within this period (the adolescent) the conversions do not distribute themselves equally among the years. In the rough, we may say they begin to occur at seven or eight years, and increase in number gradually to ten or eleven, and then rapidly to sixteen; rapidly decline to twenty, and gradually fall away after that, and become rare after thirty. One may say that if conversion has not occurred before twenty, the chances are small that it will ever be experienced." [1]

Surely these facts furnish a great lesson concerning the vast importance of early training in the home and in the Sunday-school.

What shall we do concerning children and church-membership? We believe Wesley was right when he gave all baptized children a probationary membership in the church. This gives them an intimate relation to the organic body. We do not mean that boys

[1] "The Psychology of Religion," p. 28.

and girls are to be taken promiscuously into full membership. Great care must be exercised. Prayer, patience, and persistence are needed in the training of these prospective church-members. If we could only get what has been called the "triple alliance" of parents, Bible-school teacher, and secular instructor, to work in harmony for the moral and religious development of the boys and girls, they would in most cases be worthy candidates for church-membership.

There is an old story told of a Scotch elder who was considerably aroused because his pastor habitually declined to receive children into church-membership. One day he invited the minister to go with him and see the sheep put in the fold for the night. The elder stood at the entrance to the fold and allowed the sheep to enter, but whenever a lamb came he pushed it back with a heavy stick. After a while the pastor exclaimed: "What are you doing to the lambs? They need the shelter far more than the sheep!" "Just what you are doing to the children," was the instant reply. We may add these words: "What is the use of a fold, if the lambs are to be kept outside till it is seen whether they can stand the weather?"[1]

[1] Bushnell, "Christian Nurture," p. 309.

A farmer was asked how he came to have such a fine flock of sheep. His answer was: "I take care of the lambs." It is better to keep health than to get cured after you are sick. It is better to train a boy to be honest than to cure a thief. It is better to train a boy to be truthful than to reform a liar. It is better to train a boy to be brave than to reform a coward. It is better to train a boy to love God and his playmates than to change the heart of a moral rebel. For thirty years Robert Raikes sought the reform of the criminals of the jail, but finally concluded that "prevention must be not only better but also likelier than cure." As Gypsy Smith says: "A fence at the top of a precipice is better than a hospital at the bottom."

Henry Drummond calls attention to an old poem which bears the curious title: "Strife in Heaven." The thought is as follows:

"The poet supposes himself to be walking in the streets of the New Jerusalem, when he comes to a crowd of saints engaged in a very earnest discussion. He draws near, and listens. The question they are discussing is, which of them is the greatest monument of God's saving grace. After a long debate, in which each states his case sep-

arately, and *each* claims to have been far the most wonderful trophy of God's love in all the multitude of the redeemed, it is finally agreed to settle the matter by a vote. Vote after vote is taken, and the list of competition is gradually reduced until only two remain. These are allowed to state their case again, and the company stand ready to join in the final vote. The first to speak is a very old man. He begins by saying that it is a mere waste of time to go any further; it is absolutely impossible that God's grace could have done more for any man in heaven than for him. He tells how he had led a most wicked and vicious life—a life filled up with every conceivable indulgence, and marred with every crime. He has been a thief, a liar, a blasphemer, a drunkard, and a murderer. On his deathbed, at the eleventh hour, Christ came to him and he was forgiven.

"The other is also an old man who says, in a few words, that he was brought to Christ when he was a boy. He had led a quiet and uneventful life, and had looked forward to heaven as early as he could remember.

"The vote is taken; and, of course, you would say it results in favour of the first. But no, the votes are all given to the *last.*

We might have thought, perhaps, that the one who led the reckless, godless life—he who had lied, thieved, blasphemed, murdered; he who was saved by the skin of his teeth, just a moment before it might have been too late—had the most to thank God for. But the old poet knew the deeper truth. It required great grace verily to pluck that old brand from the burning. It required depths, absolutely fathomless, depths of mercy to forgive that veteran in sin at the close of all these guilty years. But it required more grace to *keep* that other life from guilt through all these tempted years. It required more grace to save him from the sins of his youth, and keep his Christian boyhood pure, to steer him scathless through the tempted years of riper manhood, to crown his days with usefulness, and his old age with patience and hope. Both started in life together; to the one grace came at the end, to the other at the beginning. The first was saved from the *guilt* of sin, the second from the *power* of sin as well. The first was saved from *dying* in sin. But he who became a Christian in his boyhood was saved from *living* in sin. The one required just one great act of love at the close of life, the other had a life full of love,—it was a greater salvation

far. His soul was forgiven like the other, but his life was redeemed from destruction." [1]

The world is out of tune, and much of the trouble can be traced to the lack of training, or wrong training, in youth. What a scene of horror greets us as we turn our gaze upon life! Envy gnawing away with its tooth of spite; infernal conspiracies concocting schemes of iniquity; schools of scandal furnishing their finished graduates; purlieus of shame sending forth their fumes of death; minds burning up with unhallowed fires; "hearts feebly fluttering in the toils of fate"; pathetic waifs of dismantled lives whose "blossom is going up like dust"; rancorous hatred festering like cancers of infamy; corruption, incest, and vice bringing forth their heritage of woe; bigotry, greed, and passion polluting human nature, enslaving man's noblest impulses, filching away his manhood, dehumanizing his heart, and casting their winding sheet of death about him; drunken brawls, midnight murders, pistol-shots that tell of the shattered brains, all reiterate the thought of misguidance in youth and life.

When Robert Moffat was brought into the Church the people said: "*Only a boy.*" But that boy opened up new provinces to the

[1] Henry Drummond, "The Ideal Life," pp. 153–155.

Gospel, gave a translated Bible to savage tribes and brought African chiefs to the feet of Christ. With wisdom it is said: "A man converted at sixty is a soul saved plus ten years of service; a child saved at ten is a soul saved plus sixty years of service." In the children are the future saints, apostles, and prophets of the kingdom. Jesus knew the possibilities of fishermen. Beneath the rough, blustering exterior of the fisherman, Peter, Jesus saw an apostle. Under the coarse outer garb of John, Jesus recognized the possibilities of a seraphic soul, who by his Gospel would lift the world close to the heart of God. And when the Sunday-school teacher faces children he faces wonderful possibilities.

W. L. Watkinson quotes George Dawson as saying: "I should have been proud to have held the spy-glass for Columbus, to have picked up his fallen brush for Michelangelo, to have carried Milton's bag, to have blacked Shakespeare's boots, or to have blown the bellows for Handel." If such trivial service to the great is to be coveted, what shall we say, oh, teacher, of thy crown of privilege, of thy golden opportunity to mould a young life, to give impulse and inspiration to an immortal spirit?

We are told that "all that is wanted to create a new star is a start. There is a vast floating nebulæ. If it will only cohere at some little point, then the body will begin to form and presently you will have a star. All that you want is the point of contact, the cohering point, then the new life will begin to grow, and the new soul will begin to root." [1] Happy is that teacher who can get the child early in life to recognize that its growth of soul must come through contact with, and rootage in, Christ.

Guiding angels and directing demons are ready to conduct the child as he stands at the threshold of moral choices. The teacher must help him to interpret life. He must enable him to see what Browning saw, that:

"This world's no blot for us
Nor blank, it means intensely and it means good:
To find its meaning is my meat and drink."

The teacher deals with the sensitive child heart. The waves of the ocean answer the summons of the moon, and the tides proclaim with what authority the mistress of the night speaks. Iron filings respond to the call of the magnet and reveal the subtle influence of the electric current. Bursting bud and open-

[1] W. J. Dawson, in *Brooklyn Daily Eagle.*

ing flower tell us how nature obeys the whisper of spring. Scales are so delicately adjusted that even the warmth of a human body will cause the arm of the balance to turn. But more susceptible still to influence is the heart of a child. No wonder the Bible says that we must not "despise," nor "offend," nor hinder these little ones. "You must keep holy the being of the little child. Protect it from every rough and rude impression, every touch of the vulgar; a touch, a look, a sound, is often sufficient to inflict savage wounds. A child's soul is more tender and vulnerable than the finest or tenderest plant."[1] How delicate then is the teacher's task! He is no small factor in many a life. Dr. Schauffler tells of a girl who was joining the church and was asked: "What led you to Christ?" Her reply was: "First I loved my teacher, and then I loved my teacher's Bible, and then I loved my teacher's Saviour."

Sublime patience is needed in developing the inner life of the child. Sir Robert Ball tells how the light that comes from some stars is so slight that it does not affect the optic nerve. But a photographic plate exposed for hours can detect this light. The

[1] Froebel.

long exposure gives the faint and invisible beams a chance to make an impression. Our snap-shot glances at God's eternal truth do not give time for an impression. And in the teaching of the young time is an important factor. It takes time to grow a tree. A decade sweeps away, and a redwood tree of California is only a tiny sapling ; a century hurries into eternity, and it is still far from maturity ; a thousand years pass by, and it has not yet come to the zenith of its power. In the Calavera forests there are trees estimated to be six thousand years old. In the antediluvian age they sent their roots into the earth and lifted their heads to catch the dews of heaven. Through the centuries they have wrestled with the storms and packed their fibre with strength. Thus a hundred generations of men have come and gone while these forest monarchs have come to gianthood. The teacher must be patient, and learn to labour, and to trust, and to wait while boys and girls grow into spiritual grandeur and into sainthood.

When we remember that experience, science, and history teach that character tends to permanence as the years pass, the work of the teacher becomes supremely sacred and solemn. To help start a soul in

the right direction is a sublime task. Watkinson reminds us that "when the trees in the spring time are nipped by the frost they may recover, but they never quite recover; all the summer long the scarred leaves tell of their early misfortune. It is much like this with human character. A life blighted in its spring misses a certain glow in its summer, a certain ripeness in its autumn." [1]

In the child the gravitation of the soul is Godward. The young heart leaps eagerly towards the celestial. The damning power of sin is seen in the fact that this attraction becomes less and less as the life remains apart from Christ. Woe be to him for whom perdition attracts more than heaven! We must save the children. We must keep them facing heavenward.

"One ship goes East, another West
By the selfsame winds that blow,
'Tis the set of the sail and not the gale
That determines the way they go.
Like the winds of the sea are the ways of Fate
As we voyage along through life,
'Tis the set of the soul that decides the goal,
And not the calm or the strife."

Soul training is the divinest art. If Angelo could spend eighty years with sublime enthusiasm to represent the beauty of the

[1] "Beginnings of the Christian Life," p. 12.

human form in marble; if Raphael could have his heart on fire as he sought to put upon the canvas the images that burned in his brain; if the student of nature has a heart that grows hot as he examines the flower, smites the rock, or gazes at the star, then he who deals with immortal spirits that are the opening flowers in God's great garden, may have a heart that melts in mercy, glows with enthusiasm, and yearns for the salvation of those under his care. Farrar says: "If we work upon marble, it will perish; if we work upon stone, it will crumble to dust; but if we take a child and train it well, we carve a monument which time can never efface."

It is splendid work to guide the iron monster that has the giant steam pulsing in its heart; it is a worthy achievement to be able to safely direct the proud leviathan of the deep as she plows her way through the heaving main; but grander still is the accomplishment of the Sunday-school teacher who can safely direct the life-craft of an immortal spirit so that it shall miss every Scylla and Charybdis of temptation, every hidden reef and rock, mount every wave, weather every gale, and sail safely into the harbour of eternity.

We are not surprised when the Jewish Talmud says: "He who teaches the child of his fellow man shall occupy a prominent place among the saints above." No man can measure the value of a child.

Newton N. Riddell gives the following incident: "One of the first families of New York City were taking their vacation in the Adirondack Mountains. One night their little baby coughed a little croupy cough; this woke mama and thrilled her with fear; then father was disturbed; a messenger was sent to the nearest station; a croup specialist of New York was called by wire; a special train was ordered out; the regular trains on the New York Central were side-tracked; the United States mails were delayed; a wreck was caused on the freight lines; a couple who were to sail for Europe missed their steamer and thereby lost the fortune that awaited them; two United States Senators were late arriving in Washington; and a bill was lost in the Senate which affected the whole commercial world. My! what a disturbance for one croupy child to make!" [1] This hints of the estimate those parents placed upon their child.

Celestial mathematics must be employed

[1] "Immanuel," p. 194.

to determine the child's soul-worth. Man's measuring lines are too short to reach the depths of this abyss. Not until you could know the miseries of the lost, all the horrors of a blighted soul, all the pangs of a remorseful heart; not until you could experience all the joys of the just, all the delights of the ransomed, all the raptures of the redeemed; not until you could compass in your thought the sweep of eternity, and weigh in the balances of your mind the treasures of an infinite God; not until you could exhaust the meaning of heaven, hell, destiny, immortality, and eternity could you estimate the full value of a child.

IV

THE BOOK WE TEACH

"We believe that between the 'beginning' in Genesis and the 'Amen' in Revelation is the remedy for all the troubles of this world, and if we can get the Bible, with all its meaning, into the hearts and the lives of the people, we will solve every problem, social, political, ecclesiastical, and financial that the world has; and it is our duty and our office to try to bring that about."—*John Stites.*

"To tell what the Bible has been and done for the world would be to rewrite in large part the history of modern civilization; to retell the story of Christian missions, including those which brought the Gospel to our own shores; to extract the finest qualities in much of our best literature; to lay bare the inner springs of the lives of those who have laboured best and most for the moral and spiritual well-being of their kind."—*James Orr.*

"In the Bible there is more that *finds* me than I have experienced in all other books put together; the words of the Bible find me at greater depths of my being; and whatever finds me brings with it an irresistible evidence of its having proceeded from the Holy Spirit."—*Samuel Taylor Coleridge.*

IV

The Book We Teach

WORDS enshrine ideas. They link mind with mind; they are the tracks upon which ideas run. A literature treasures up the chief heritage of a people. Hence Lytton said: "There is no Past so long as books shall live." Milton said: "A good book is the precious life-blood of a master spirit embalmed and treasured up on purpose to a life beyond life." Æneas Sage declared that "books are the true Elysian fields where the spirits of the dead converse." "Give me a book, health, and a June day," said Emerson, "and I will make the pomp of kings ridiculous."

By means of books we may march with Alexander as he rears new dynasties amid the wreck of dismantled kingdoms. We may go with Hannibal as he scales the Alps and rushes down their icy slopes into sunny Italy to threaten the Roman dominion. We may go with Columbus until he touches the shores of a new world. We may go with Magellan as he girdles the globe. We may

go with Hugh Miller among the rocks, and with Newton in his study of the stellar hosts. As Balfour says: "You may enter at your leisure into the intellectual heritage of the centuries"; and a medieval writer declares: "All minds in the world's history find their focus in a library. This is the pinnacle of the temple from which we may see all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them."

With the Bible in hand we may go with the author of Genesis as he unrolls the panorama of creation, with the prophets in their lofty imagery, with the gospel writers in their portraiture of the Christ, with Paul as he unfolds the philosophy of salvation. We may follow the lead of the Bible as it tells of sin and of a Saviour found, of man lost and of man redeemed, of death as "the wages of sin" and of eternal life as "the gift of God." In this Book we have "the record of the divine education of the race."

The sunlight stored up in coal has been used to illustrate how truth has been stored up in the Bible. Ages upon ages ago God's sunlight was packed away in the great trees that grew. The trees became carbonated, and now, myriads of years later, we dig up the coal. We place this fuel in our furnaces,

and the stored up sunlight of other days warms us. So in the olden time God spake unto the fathers, and unto the prophets, and unto the apostles, and holy men of God wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Their messages are in the Book, and by the help of that Spirit who inspired them the treasured truth glows and lives again. "As God made man and breathed into him the breath of life and he became a living soul, so God made the Scriptures and breathed into them the breath of life, and they became the living Word."

Heinrich Heine exclaims as he thinks of the Bible: "What a Book! Vast and wide as the world, rooted in the abysses of Creation, and towering up behind the blue secrets of heaven. Sunrise and sunset, promise and fulfillment, birth and death, the whole drama of humanity, all in this Book!"

Robert Pollock sings:

"Most wondrous book! bright candle of the Lord!
Star of eternity! the only star
By which the bark of man could navigate
The sea of life, and gain the coast of bliss
Securely."

Our English word "Bible" is from *biblos* and *biblos* was the inner bark of the Egyptian reed, the papyrus plant out of which paper

was first made. "Liber," the Latin word for book, was the inner bark of the linden, or beech tree. Our word "book" is from "beche" (Old English) and has reference to the origin of the paper out of which the book is made.

The Bible is not one book but sixty-six books. It is an unconscious tribute that we pay to the harmony of the Scriptures when we speak of the sixty-six books as one book. The unity of the Bible seems yet more wonderful when we remember that its composition extended over a period of fifteen hundred years, and that it was written by some forty authors. The writers of this Book are lawgivers, kings, prophets, shepherds, herdmen, vine-dressers, fishermen, physicians, and publicans. Its contents are history, prophecy, poetry, drama, pastoral letters, fiction, and revelation.

As a piece of literature the Bible is a wonderful Book, though this is not its chief claim upon our attention. "The apples are gold, but even the basket is silver." "The pearl is of great price; but even the casket is of exquisite beauty." When Ruskin, the prince among the nineteenth century prose writers, was a boy, his mother made him commit to memory much of the Bible. In later years Ruskin said: "To that discipline I owe the

best part of my taste in literature." When Matthew Arnold was on a voyage from America to England he read much. Some one asked him what book he was reading, and he replied: "The New Testament. I find it the most delightful reading I can get, and its style and merit as a work of literature never cease to please me."

Lord Macaulay said: "Whoever would acquire a knowledge of pure English must study King James' version of the Scriptures." Thomas Carlyle characterized the book of Job as "one of the greatest things ever written by a pen." Goethe, referring to the book of Ruth, declared: "It is the loveliest thing in the shape of an epic or idyl which has come down to us from the centuries." Max Müller, the great student of oriental languages, says: "My most delightful hour every day is furnished by David. There is nothing in Greece, nothing in Rome, nothing in all the west like David." Coleridge calls the book of Ephesians "the divinest composition of man." Literature furnishes no poetry grander than the Psalms, no history more charming than the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles, no fiction to compare with our Lord's parables, no stateliness like the moving majesty of Job and Isaiah.

In the nature of its themes the Bible surpasses all other books. It speaks of God, of creation, of providence, of angels, of man, of life, of death, of immortality, of eternity, of destiny, of salvation, of heaven, and of hell. In breadth and sweep of theme it is more vast than any other book, in flight more lofty, in depth more profound.

The Bible in history is a theme worthy of the Sunday-school teacher's attention and study. This Book is wrought into the history of generations. Huxley said: "It is an unquestionable fact that for the last three centuries this Book has been woven into all that is best in English literature and history." Listen to Haydn's "Creation," and remember that it is the first chapter of Genesis in music. When you hear Handel's "Messiah" with its sublime strains, remember that the Bible was the inspiration of that rapturous hymn. When Handel was told by his Sovereign that the "Messiah" afforded him great pleasure, Handel said to the Emperor: "Your Majesty, I did not intend to arouse or to afford pleasure; I meant to make the world better." When he composed the passage that accompanies the words, "He was despised and rejected," Handel wept. He tells us that when he wrote the "Hallelujah Chorus" he

thought he saw "the heavens open with the angels standing about the throne."

Ask Milton concerning the sublimest poem of our language and he will tell you that the Bible is its mother. The writings of Shakespeare, of Wordsworth, of Browning, of Tennyson, of Longfellow, of Lowell, and of Whittier are saturated with the Bible. Shakespeare alone has three thousand Biblical quotations in his writings, and Tennyson four hundred and sixty.

The artist Millet said: "I get my inspiration from reading the Psalms of David." Whoever has visited the famous art galleries knows that the Bible has furnished many of the scenes for the greatest artists of the world.

The Bible is the book upon which reformers have fed the holy fires that flamed in their bosoms. It is the book that has kindled the lamp of hope in the breast of the slave. The Bible is the fountain from which the streams of liberty have flowed. The translated Bible vitalized English civilization in Wyclif's day.

Dr. John Clifford, of London, speaking of the influence of the Bible upon England's civilization, said: "The Bible has made us. Our Reformation sprang out of that Book. It was the Bible preached by Wyclif and his poor priests which inspired that revolt against

papacy which at length in our departure from Rome and in the ascent of the British people to freedom of conscience and to sovereignty in the life of the world." [1] Froude, the historian, declares that "all that we have in the way of civilization in a sense which deserves the term, is but a visible expression of the transforming influence of the Gospel."

The open Bible in Luther's hand brought Germany to her feet with the cry of liberty on her lips. William Wilberforce who did yeoman service in breaking the chains from the bondmen of Great Britain said: "Read the Bible! Read the Bible! Through all my perplexities and distresses I never read any other book, I never knew the want of any other." Andrew Jackson, pointing to the Bible, said: "That Book is the rock on which our Republic rests." Emerson declared that the Puritan pulpits "were the springs of American liberty." But those Puritan pulpits drank from the Bible's fountain of truth. Upon this Bible brought by the Pilgrim Fathers this mighty Republic of the West was founded.

This Book is the inspiration back of hospitals and asylums, and of all the highest types of charity, mercy, and protection for

[1] "Sacerdotalism and Sunday-schools," p. 14.

the weak. The sweet humanities of our day have come out of the heart of Christian love. Macaulay says: "I altogether abstain from alluding to topics which belong to divines; I speak merely as a politician, anxious for the morality and the temporal well-being of society; and so speaking, I say that to discountenance that religion which has done so much to promote justice, and mercy, and freedom, and arts, and sciences, and good government, and domestic happiness, which has struck off the chains of the slave, which has mitigated the horrors of war, which has raised women from servants, and playthings into companions and friends, is to commit high treason against humanity and civilization." In his "History of European Morals," Lecky, writing of the influence of Christ, says: "The simple record of three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and to soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists."

A modern writer, who has drawn arrows from many quivers, tells us that when Charles Dickens was asked what is the most touching story in literature, he replied: "The story of the Prodigal Son." When Coleridge was asked to name the richest passage in litera-

ture, he answered: "The Beatitudes." Burke called the "Sermon on the Mount" the most impressive political document on the rights of man. The sentence best loved by children in all literature is: "Suffer the children to come unto Me"; the sentence best loved by the aged is: "Let not your heart be troubled"; the sentence best loved by men is: "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." [1]

Take away the Bible and its influence upon mankind and you rob the historian of his most thrilling chapters, the artist of his sweetest conceptions, the poet of his loftiest themes, and the prophet of God of his divinest messages. As we earnestly read this Book doubt fades and faith kindles, hypocrisy unmasks and sincerity lives, despair enters into its death pangs and hope reblooms, hatred perishes and love lives and grows, sin slinks away and piety prays, transient things shrivel and eternal verities assume their true magnitude, a new spring-tide fills the heart with song and joy, and God rises in majesty on the soul.

The continuance of this Book in its influence upon history is most wondrous. Myriads of books never reach a second edition.

[1] Hillis, "The Influence of Christ in Modern Life," p. 75.

The librarian of Edinburgh University said one day to Professor Simpson: "How many books shall I reserve in the library for your students?" The reply was: "You may put every book in the cellar that is more than ten years old." [1] Books in that department over a decade old were only curiosities.

Bishop Warren says of the Bible: "It rose out of the spirit world that is the source of all power. So in all the years of your coming life the Bible will rise out of the spirit world with the same voice that commanded the light to shine out of darkness. The loftiest scholarship will revere it. Ethics will turn to it for its principles and authority. Philosophy will find its loftiest flights therein. Legislation will be based on it. There poetry will find its deepest wells of inspiration, and oratory its most sonorous periods and aptest quotations to bejewel its grandest flights." [2]

This Bible has stood the tempests of millenniums. Diocletian tried to exterminate it in the third century. Bold, keen, and learned criticism has done its worst from the days of Celsus until now to undermine its message. The astute Porphyry hurled his venomed

[1] "Drummond's Addresses," p. 66.

[2] "The Bible in the World's Education," p. 152.

shafts. Hume with rare subtlety wielded cogent weapons. He said: "Methinks I see the twilight of Christianity." It has been suggested that he mistook the time of day. It was the twilight, but not of the evening that deepens into night, but of the morning that brightens to the glory of Christianity's noon.

Voltaire flung his arrows tipped with fire. He said: "I will go through your theological forest and girdle every tree; so that in a quarter of a century not a sapling shall be left to you." He boasted that he would soon make deism the religion of the world, but his printing press was soon printing Bibles. Tom Paine waged the fight in his "Age of Reason," but he has gone "to join the armies of the obsolete," and the Bible's gospel message still moves on tender in sympathy, majestic in grandeur, triumphant in its march.

Sir Isaac Newton said that if all the great books of the world were given life, and they should come together in a convention: "The moment the Bible entered, the other books would fall upon their faces, even as the gods of Philistia fell when the ark of God was brought into their presence."

The books of the enemies of the Bible soon

pass out of print, but millions upon millions of copies of the Bible are sold every year. The British and Foreign Bible Society has published over two hundred million copies since 1804, the date of its organization. It now issues about six million copies per year. About seventy-five Bible societies publish twenty-five thousand copies of this sacred Book every week-day.

This Book is translated into more than four hundred languages. Three million copies of the Revised Version were called for in a few days when it was put upon the market. Before the Revised New Testament was published in 1881 a million copies had been sold. This was not a new book, only a new translation of an old one. On May 21, 1881, it is said that the streets of New York were blocked with people trying to get the Revised New Testament. The four Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Epistle to the Romans were telegraphed from New York to Chicago that they might appear in the morning papers. We are told that one Chicago paper employed ninety-two compositors and five proof-readers, and they completed their task in twelve hours.

The dusty lips of archæology are constantly adding their testimony concerning

the truthfulness of this Book, and while its enemies die, and their criticisms come to naught "the Word of our God abideth forever."

"Last eve I stood before a blacksmith's door,
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime,
Then walking in, I saw upon the floor,
Old hammers worn by beating years of time.

"'How many anvils have you had?' said I,
'To beat and shatter all these hammers so?'
'Just one,' said he; then said with twinkling eye,
'The anvil wears the hammers out, you know.'

"And so I thought the anvil of God's Word
For ages skeptic blows have beat upon:
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The anvil is unharmed; the hammers gone."

The Bible is not a text-book on science. It has no canons of criticism on art or music. Its prime purpose is to reveal God, human duty, and human destiny. And the Bible is to be judged by its message upon these themes. It is well to remember Galileo's reply when he was accused of heresy: "The Bible was given to tell how to go to heaven, and not how the heavens go." Man profoundly needs instruction concerning God, Duty, and Destiny, and concerning these the Bible gives illumination. This is why the

Bible "is the throbbing heart of Sunday-school work," and of all other work that seeks to win people to a religious life.

So we recognize in the Bible not simply a book of literature, and a book that has wrought itself into history, but we see in it a Book of divine Revelation, a Book of Salvation, a Book of Life. This is its mighty message. Bishop Vincent says of the Bible: "It has but one theme from beginning to end. The Bible gradually developed through the centuries, and in an important sense being now gradually developed, has always one central, dominating idea,—the divine relief or remedy for the human need. There is practically no other subject in the Bible: Sin and Salvation; human weakness and divine strength; man's thirst and God's river of life; human darkness and heaven's light; disease and remedy; weariness and rest; despair and hope; death and life."[1] It is because it is a Book of Life that it has been able to withstand the assaults of the centuries.

The Egyptians had a book called "The Book of the Dead," but Watkinson says: "God's most holy Word is the Book of Life, and the book of the living—it makes souls, creeds, nations, civilizations to breathe and

[1] Address: "A Forward Look for the Sunday-school."

grow. It is the radium of the moral world. . . . Scientists aver that a particle of radium encloses a gulf of fire which will radiate heat for eighty thousand years; these doctrines of revelation are yet richer in force —they defy centuries and outlast stars."[1]

At the great Sunday-school Convention held at the City Temple in London, in 1898, Bishop Fowler said of the Bible: "The universe is too narrow for it. Time is too short for it. It is as deep as the foundations of eternal justice; as wide as the moral government; as high as the throne of the Infinite, and as enduring as the life of the Almighty, and its inspiration is as exhaustless as the love of God."

In its revelation of *God* the Bible meets a profound need of the human heart. Life bristles with interrogation points. Problems, many and weighty, crowd upon the mind and cry for solution. Every blade of grass quivers with questions to which no man can respond. Every fluttering leaf trembles with mysteries which no man can unravel. Man is tormented by the "riddles of creation." Man's thought plunges into the ocean of mystery about him, and into the abyss of mystery within him. But the arrows of his

[1] "The Supreme Conquest," pp. 170, 174.

thought cannot pierce far. The plummet of his thought does not drop deep. The flashes of his inspiration are soon swallowed up in the gulf of mystery.

Man craves a revelation of God and from God. Homer represents Ulysses as "always roaming with a hungry heart." Cicero said: "I see no gods on Mount Olympus." He was crushed at the thought of no adequate revelation. The Psalmist said: "My heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God." The Magi eagerly followed the star, because it hinted of a revelation from heaven. Richter writes: "On every hilltop, in the summits of the loftiest natures of every nation, will be found an altar to the unseen personal God." And man wherever found is well represented as "standing at the eastern window waiting for the dawn."

Man, baffled and perplexed, has cried: "Oh, that I knew where I might find Him! As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. Tell me Thy name." Man sees the earth parched, scorched, and gaping for rain, and he sees in it a symbol of his soul passion and he cries: "My soul thirsteth for Thee." Thinking of the frailty of man and of the majesty of God he pleads: "Bow the heavens and

come down." God is the Reality after which our hearts run. Philip was spokesman for the race when he said: "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us."

The Bible speaks to the perplexed. Lelande said that he had swept the heavens with his telescope and could find no God, and he pretended thus to settle the question of the divine existence in the negative. But that does not satisfy. "No thought without phosphorus," cried Moleschott, but that does not clear the sky. Without Christ's revelation we are correctly called "midgets only, maddened with our little touch of mind." Without Christ's word in this Book we must resign ourselves to what Ibsen calls "the eternal silence of the stars." But in the Bible there is dawn, sunrise, revelation.

The Bible's revelation of God is brightening the hopes of man. It speaks to the perplexities of the race; it faces the problems of the heart. It tells us how man may creep within the fold of the divine affection. It tells us not simply of the kingship of the Eternal, but of the kinship we have with Him. The Bible "unveils" the Father. No wonder Coleridge said: "I believe in the Book because it *finds* me."

The Bible reveals our Father as a God of

providence. God is presented as the Creator and Sustainer of uncounted worlds. He walks upon the wings of the wind. The clouds are His chariots. He hears the ravens when they cry. He guards the planet in its sweep, and the insect in its flight. He opens the gates of the morning and the petals of the rose. His footsteps are heard in the roar of the storm and in the sob of the sea. He calls the stars by name. "He bindeth the sweet influences of the Pleiades, and looseth the bands of Orion. He bringeth forth Mazzaroth in his season, and guideth Arcturus with his sons." Not a wave ripples upon the bosom of the sea, not a leaf flutters to its fall, not a flower opens its eyes to the sun, not a dewdrop quivers on the clover-leaf, not a snowflake makes its wandering way to our world, not a rain-drop falls in silence on the sea that God does not commission.

The Bible reveals God not as a King upon a marble throne, nor as a Judge who rules with a rod of iron, nor as a Being "fierce, relentless, and vindictive," but as the Lover of our race, whose throne is pillared upon mercy.

The Bible shows that the Father's love has an immortal bloom. It reveals how His love broke the silence of eternity and drew Him

out of the unseen and we beheld the glory of that divine affection in the life and mission of our Saviour. The Bible shows us how God's love hovers over the sleeping babe, and solaces the heart of the weary mother as she watches by the cradle of her smitten child; how His love keeps its unfailing vigils in the sick-room, by the open grave, and in the valley of the shadow of death; how His love soothes the burning temple, cools the feverish brow, and quiets the whirling brain; how His love causes the sun of joy to burst from the riven cloud, and the flower of hope to break to beauteous blossom at our feet; how His love twines its chains of golden thoughts concerning destiny and immortality about the brittle thread of life; how His love stations a guardian angel beside the cradle, an angel of blessing in the home, and a resurrection by the tomb.

The Bible shows us a God who not only makes the clouds His chariots, but who sees my falling tear; who not only walks upon the wings of the wind, but who wings a message of love to my sick heart; who not only weighs planets in the balances of His thought, but who weighs the burden of my soul; who is not only a God of power, of glory, and of moving majesty, but a God who is my

heavenly Father, and who loves me, His erring child.

When the Bible drops the plummet of its thought into the abyss of God we must not be surprised if mystery is found. In the picture it presents of God there will surely be some lines that stretch away into infinity. Reason must have left her throne if men do not expect mystery here. If there were no mystery in a book which sought to tell us of the Infinite we might well conclude that it was an entirely man-made production. With Bishop Thomson we say: "When Jehovah, from His mountain home, sends down a messenger, what wonder that there should be some spots upon his face too bright for mortal eye, and whose brightness must, therefore, be shaded. Happy are we that there are. They speak of the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, and of His inaccessible dwelling in light; they speak of the immortality and progress and coming illumination of the soul; they keep the mind forever on the knee and forever on the wing."[1]

The Bible gives revelation concerning *Duty*. The Bible's truth is the daylight for the soul. It lifts the anchors of our thought. It shows

[1] "Religious Essays," p. 18.

us "the counsels of the Eternal mind." It touches infinite circles. It makes the truth glow and swing in solemn splendour before us. It indicates what we are to do, what to seek, and what to be. It reveals to us the blessedness of the lowly, of the meek, of those who thirst after righteousness, of the merciful, of the pure in heart, of the peacemakers, of those persecuted for righteousness' sake.

The Bible indicates how Christ's disciples must preserve society, and illuminate the world. It teaches that anger must not reign, that brother must be reconciled to brother, that man must not have the lustful look, nor the angry spirit. It speaks of the law of truthfulness, of love for God, for neighbour, and even for enemies. It tells us how to pray, where to lay up treasure, and where to impose our trust. Love and service must enter like golden threads into life's garment. We must be "conscious of duties" rather than clamour forever for our "rights." Doing these things man shall "ripen a heavenly harvest, and the Christian shall at last drop from the boughs of life into the lap of God like mellow fruit."

The Bible tells of human *Destiny*. A young man asked the burning question:

"What must I do to inherit eternal life?" The Bible gives answer. It tells us that this life and the life to come are linked as seed-time and harvest, as cause and effect. Men are on their way to a judgment throne where Christ is Judge. There will be an eternal kingdom which the righteous shall inherit, and from which the wicked shall be excluded. The separation will take place according to an inner law of the life of those judged. As Phillips Brooks said: "The Judge just lifts His hand and raises from each soul before Him every law of constraint whose pressure has been its education. The real intrinsic nature of each soul leaps to the surface. Each soul's law of liberty becomes supreme. They turn and separate. The freeing of souls is the judging of souls. A liberated soul dictates its own destiny."

The Bible reveals to us a living, reigning Saviour. There was recognition of Christ's authority in myriad ways when He was in the flesh. The fig tree withered at His word. At His command blind eyes began to see, deaf ears began to hear, dumb lips began to speak. One day Jesus fell asleep in the boat on the Sea of Galilee. The storm broke in fury. The tempest lashed the sea into madness. The hissing flood threatened to engulf the little

craft. The elements were wild with tumult, and the face of Jesus must have been moistened by the spray. Jesus awoke. He uttered His word; the tumult was hushed; the sea sobbed to silence.

Evil spirits took possession of a man, but the Christ of authority came that way. At His command the evil spirits fled. They acknowledged Jesus as the Christ of authority. He whispered into the ear of the sleeper who lay shrouded in the embrace of death, and forthwith the heart beat anew, the eye flashed and the hue of life and health returned. "At His girdle hang the keys of death."

When Peter, James, and John are on the Mount of Transfiguration, out of the cloud comes a voice to the apostles saying, "Hear ye Him." Moses is there. He had been leader, lawgiver, and deliverer of Israel, but the Christ of authority is there, and Moses must be silent and listen to Him. Elijah is there. He had fulfilled a great mission. He had unsealed heaven with prayer. He had brought defeat and ruin to the prophets of evil. But now the Christ of supreme authority is present, and the lips of Elijah must be mute. "This is My Son, hear ye Him."

Morrison of England says: "We are ex-

aggerating to-day the supplicating and beseeching Jesus. We are taking the grandeur from the throne by thinking of Jesus as our lifelong suppliant."[1] He does knock at the door of the heart, but we must remember that it is a King who knocks. And Christ is King "not merely by an office conferred, but by a triumph won. He faced the enemies of the race—sin, and sorrow, and ignorance, and death—and His foot is upon the neck of every one." Speaking of the kingship of Christ one of God's modern prophets says: "We keep Him nailed to the cross as if we had forgotten that His life knew only six hours on the cross and unnumbered ages on the throne. The prints of the nails will never fade out of His palms, but they are hidden by the sceptre which He holds."

We are glad Jesus was once the babe of Bethlehem, the child of Nazareth, the youth of the temple, the preacher of the mount, and the Christ of the cross, and so sanctified all life from cradle to grave, from birth to death. But He is now the risen, triumphant Lord, the invincible Leader of His militant host. That brow that once bled from a crown of thorns is now jewelled with coronets of glory. Those eyes that once looked upon a crazed

[1] "Comradeship and Character," by Various Authors, p. 213.

and murderous mob now see millions paying homage at His feet. That hand that once bled from the cruel nails now grasps the sceptre of empire. He who was once execrated, maligned, and disgraced, is now honoured, worshipped, and adored. He who had no place to lay His head sits now upon a throne. He has gone from a tree of shame to an empire of power, from crucifixion to coronation, the man of sorrows has become the King of kings.

Napoleon could move an army, Cicero could arouse a city, Demosthenes could thrill a nation, but Jesus Christ with His word of authority and power can move the world. Socrates may wave his wand for a few centuries, Plato may charm the world for a few ages, Aristotle may bear sway for a millennium, but Christ need never abdicate His throne, for He is Lord of heaven and King of men.

The Lily of the Valley is sending forth sweet fragrance into all the world. The Rose of Sharon has an immortal bloom. The Star of Bethlehem is in the ascendant. Christ is sending forth His truth and His light. The dew of the morning is upon His brow. A world-encircling and century-encompassing glance is in His eye. He steps

with the tread of a conqueror upon the crests of the centuries. He leads no forlorn hope. His dominion is a certainty. He will belt the globe with universal sovereignty. The citadel of His power rises up out of the chaos, and from its windows, He, the sentry of the ages, cries unto His watchmen upon the walls of Zion: "What of the night?" and they send back the answer: "The dawn cometh!" On His vesture and on His thigh is written: "King of kings and Lord of lords." And this "swordless King" of the ages will neither faint nor grow weary until "the Gentiles come to His light and kings to the brightness of His rising," not until He shall see of the travail of His soul and is abundantly satisfied, not until they write "holiness to God upon the bells of the horses," not until the redeemed of empires below, with the redeemed of courts above, sing in harmony sweeter than ten thousand harps:

"All hail the power of Jesus' name
Let angels prostrate fall,
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown Him Lord of all."

When we thus come to see the value of this Bible in literature, its place in history, and its mighty message to the heart of the

race we are not surprised that man is slow to let it die. What a vision it brings before us! With majestic tread it conducts us through the days of Creation. Its message flows from the lips of sage, of seer, of prophet, and of apostle, and from the Saviour's heart of fire. It opens to our view the loving heart of our heavenly Father; it unbars the gates of man's soul and lets the light divine shine in; it opens the gates of the future and discloses the mysteries of the hereafter; it points man to the way of salvation and to the gates of life; it reveals the qualities of mind and heart we must foster and cherish; it tells us that every word we utter is "docketed for the judgment," and that every act is sublime because "its vibrations are eternal." It shows us that religion is not "renunciation" as Goethe said, that the will of God is not something to be *endured* or something to be *feared*, but something to be *done*, and something to be *delighted* in, and that "he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." It tells us that religion's ways are "ways of pleasantness," and that her paths are "paths of peace," that "the depressions of a true, pure life are higher than the altitudes of worldliness and sin." It shows us that there are no joys like the joys of the ransomed, no

hopes like the hopes of the redeemed, no songs so celestial as the songs of Israel, and no harps so sweet as those attuned on Zion's hill. It shows us the Christ of authority and power, and the Christ of the cooling hand, of the healing word, of the benignant smile, of the loving soul, of the forgiving spirit, of the tender heart, the Christ whose touch is life and whose smile is heaven. This is the Book, O teacher! which you are to study, assimilate, and translate into a living gospel, and which you are to "cause another to know."

V

DECISION DAY IN THE SUNDAY-SCHOOL

"I am fully persuaded that if we could secure a general and wise observance of Decision Day, the Church would have the revival for which we have been praying."—*W. C. Pearce.*

"The teacher ought to understand what the step of Christian decision involves in their (scholars) case, and then to ask and expect and help them to take that step.

"The bringing of the scholars into the faith and the likeness of Jesus is the only proper end and aim of the Sunday-school teacher's endeavours."—*H. Clay Trumbull.*

"An objection often heard to Decision Day is that every day should be Decision Day. To this also we quite agree. But is it not true that every day should be a thanksgiving day? Yet we are not prepared to drop our annual Thanksgiving Day from the calendar."—*Marion Lawrance.*

"As Christian workers we are not satisfied unless decisions for Christ are followed by church-membership; and in the minds of most people, children as well as adults, such decisions are thus associated—perhaps because this generally follows. It is therefore proper that the questions which relate to winning our scholars to Christ and those that concern their becoming members of the church be treated together."—*David C. Cook.*

V

Decision Day in the Sunday-School

I. *Why have Decision Day in the Sunday-school?* 1. Because moral decision is a crucial matter in the history of a soul. The power of choice is among the sublimest gifts of God to man. This is a part of the divine image in which man was created. This is a regal crown with which God adorned man. It constitutes at once the glory and the solemnity of life.

> "So nigh is grandeur to our dust,
> So near is God to man,
> When Duty whispers low, 'Thou must,'
> The youth replies, 'I can.'"

Man's destiny for weal or for woe rests with himself. Planets blindly obey the laws that govern their majestic march. Beasts follow their native instincts. Man is free, his course in life is self-determined. He can do or not do the moral acts of life. Choice is a necessity of his condition. This is the divine economy under which he lives. Take away man's freedom of will and he becomes a ma-

chine, virtue becomes a phantom, evil a dream, and moral responsibility a delusion. Man's will is the hinge upon which his destiny swings. Character is a child of choice. If man makes choice of the good, the forces of righteousness begin to act, and they help him build noble character. "Tendency indicates choice," says one. Let that truth burn in the heart. People conclude that they are not rejecting Christ, but the "tendency" of the life really indicates the choice, and prophesies an approaching goal of moral ruin. So the vast significance of moral decisions in a human life argues for the observance of Decision Day in the Sunday-school.

2. It helps to make clear the real aim of the Sunday-school, namely: to get scholars to accept Christ as their Saviour, and after this fundamental decision to develop Christian character according to the pattern and teaching of Christ. The teacher gains the conviction that the truth must not only be presented carefully, but presented so as to be welcomed into the heart of the scholar and become a part of his life. The teacher comes to see more clearly that the scholar who is not a Christian must be led to Christ, and the one who is a Christian must be built up in Christ.

3. It tells the teacher that he must concrete his efforts. It crystallizes the teacher's work around a definite object. It leads to specific personal work. This is great gain. The successful hunter takes aim, so does the wise teacher.

4. The observance of Decision Day reveals to many a teacher that he can do true evangelistic work. What wealth of blessing comes, not only to the scholars won by the teacher, but to the teacher also, when a soul has been led to make definite decision for Christ!

5. Decision Day gives opportunity under favourable surroundings for boys and girls to make an open avowal of their Christian discipleship. Enormous gain is made when the scholar is led to a public committal of his life to Christ. Some boys and girls are timid and shy, and it is very difficult to secure an open confession of their purpose to be Christians. We believe Decision Day in the Sunday-school furnishes a rare opportunity to enlist such scholars on the side of Christ.

6. It builds the church. Decision Day shrinks the loss between the Sunday-school and the church. A few years ago it was claimed that only thirty-three per cent. of the

scholars who entered our Sunday-schools came directly from these schools into church-membership. About ten years ago a man of New York City said that according to the data furnished for a number of years previous to 1900, about one-fifth of the scholars of our Protestant Sunday-schools of New York State confessed Christ while members of those schools. The observance of Decision Day is helping to change this appalling fact.

II. *Preparation for Decision Day.* Let the Sunday-school Board carefully consider this matter, counsel together concerning it, and pray about it until a solemn conviction of the need and opportunity of Decision Day takes deep root in their hearts. Let the pastor preach once or more on themes that set forth the importance of early decision for Christ. Let him show that the Sunday-school is the truly great evangelistic agency in our world to-day. Let him lay the responsibility of winning the scholars to Christ on the hearts of the parents and teachers.

Let the prayer-meeting of the church be conducted in the interests of the Sunday-school with special reference to Decision Day. By Sabbath and week-day services seek to enlist the hearty coöperation of as many parents as possible in the Decision

Day service. Magnify the Sunday-school and its great work in the hearing of all the people.

Have a prayer-meeting for the teachers, and officers and pastor on Saturday night, or better still on Sunday just before the Sunday-school hour. Let this be a time of real heart preparation for the delicate task that is at hand. Pray for a baptism of tenderness and for a spirit of Christlike solicitude for the salvation of the scholars of the school.

Some teachers follow the plan of getting decisions for Christ in their classes even weeks before Decision Day. To do this it is wise to see the scholar alone. This can be done by having the scholar come to your home or office, or by calling on the scholar where you will be sure of a private conversation. A boy or girl will open the heart much more readily, and express more frankly the difficulties in the way, when only the teacher's ears can hear. This method of procedure makes of Decision Day more what is called, "Witness Day." This plan has its advantages, for as suggested by one: "Every farmer knows he cannot set a date and say, 'I will harvest all my corn and oats on August tenth.'" The most opportune moment to secure decisions for Christ may

not occur on a particular Sunday in the case of all you desire to reach, so by working through several weeks towards the aim of Decision Day more scholars may be won for Christ than by simply using the one appointed day.

As a part of the preparation for Decision Day let there be an expression on the part of the teacher of his deep interest in the spiritual welfare of the members of his class. Let them know and feel the yearning solicitude of your heart for their personal decision for Jesus Christ. Pray over this matter until the expression of your interest will be truly genuine, and from the depths of your heart.

III. *How to conduct the service on Decision Day.* Cast-iron methods cannot be given. I venture to give simply one plan used several times by the writer.

Have a half hour prayer service with pastor, teachers, and officers present just before the session of the school. During the school period avoid anything like business just as far as possible. As Marion Lawrance suggests: "Let there be no rattle of machinery." Let all the hymns sung conduce to the supreme object of the day—decision for Christ. Let several persons lead briefly in most earnest, intercessory prayer. Let the

teachers have fifteen minutes with their classes that they may make the personal appeal for their scholars to make definite choice of Jesus as their Saviour. If the lesson for the day furnishes the basis for such an appeal use it, but if not, do not hesitate to neglect the lesson and with heart of fire plead as a faithful embassador of Christ for the committal of the life to Jesus.

Let me here relate the experience of a young lady teacher on a Decision Day. The day was approaching when, according to the plan, all the Sunday-schools in a certain city were to make a concerted effort to secure decisions for Christ. This young lady spent much of the Saturday night in prayer. On the Sabbath she went into the Sunday-school service with a tender and glowing heart, for the touch of God was upon her spirit. By and by the time came for the teachers to make the appeal to their classes. This young woman pled with one and another, and one decision after another was made for Christ. When the hour closed all but two, I think, of a class of about a dozen had yielded to this persistent pleader.

When the teachers have made their appeal, then let the pastor speak to the school, and after brief but fervent words, let him call

for an open acknowledgment of the decision to take Christ as Saviour and Lord. He can have the scholars do this by standing or by coming forward. Here the teacher may give an additional word of appeal and encouragement while the pastor is giving the call.

After this let there be a time for prayer, and while hearts aglow with love are praying, still other decisions may be gotten by one more appeal on the part of the teachers who are near their scholars.

Before the dismissal let the names and addresses of all who have made decisions be gotten, so that the pastor as well as the teacher may know the result in every class. A form of Decision Day card may very well be used. Here is one form:

MY DECISION

I accept Jesus Christ as my Saviour. I purpose to serve Him all my life.

Scholar's name, ...

Address, ...

Date, ...

IV. *After Decision Day.* Those who have made a real decision on Decision Day should be gotten into what is designated in Method-

ist churches as the "Probationer's Class," and in other churches by varying names. Where we have the triple alliance of pastor, teacher, and parent this will not be very difficult. But often we do not have such a happy combination. Then tact, persistence, consecration, every gift and grace that man can command is needed for the task that is before the pastor and teacher.

The matter of joining the church is very closely connected with the work of Decision Day and is of such marked importance that we may well consider it carefully.

The Church is a divine institution. She has a divine commission from her Lord. She does not make the truth, but she is commissioned to proclaim it, to testify to it, and to live it. She is not the way, but a witness to the way. She is a Voice, a herald.

She gives protection. Parents who do not go to church often desire to have their children in the Sunday-school. To illustrate the safety the church affords some one has used the illustration of an apple tree that grows inside the garden wall and one that grows in the public highway. The old apple tree in the lane at the edge of a village is full of sticks and clubs. It belongs to the public. It is unprotected. The apples are knocked

off when only half grown. The tree is worthless. Just inside the garden fence is a similar tree, but it is protected. Its fruit comes to perfection. The apple tree in the lane is like a person trying to live a Christian life outside of the church.

The church gives the signal of danger. It was a noble deed when Paul Revere hung out the lantern in the tower of the Old North Church, Salem Street, Boston, and so warned the Colonists that the British were coming. So the church hangs out the signal of danger and warns those within the fold.

The church speaks to us of God. One of the most impressive sights of London is Saint Paul's Cathedral. I remember how one cloudy, gloomy day I walked across a section of the city, and above the darkness and the gloom of the lower streets I saw the dome of that great temple of worship pointing up to God. Bishop Quayle speaking of Saint Paul's says: "Its huge dome crowds up above the shoulders of the mercantile metropolis. On the road to the Bank of England this house of God stands, and where commerce swirls wilder than a winter sea, there climbs the spacious dome up, up, hunting God."

If the church is instituted of God, and is

for protection, and for the salvation of the world, then the Christian ought to join it. Yet the pastor meets difficulty in getting young people who take their stand on Decision Day to take their place as candidates for church-membership. The Sunday-school teachers can help much here. Let them show the scholar that the Christian who refuses to join the church is counted as being against Christ. Ask a person about becoming a Christian, and if he does not want to, he will be quite sure to say: "I don't want to join the church." That is to say, he estimates Christianity by the church-members. If you are not a church-member, and yet count yourself a Christian, the world counts you as against Christ, and you are the only person who can correct that false impression. No man has ever been given the right to assume an attitude such that, if every other person assumed the same attitude, would annihilate the church, and secret discipleship means the annihilation of Christianity.

Young converts especially need the church. We come to Christ not first of all for Jesus' sake, but for our *own* sake. And we join the church first of all not because the church needs us, but more because *we need the church*. Does any man rightly estimate his

spiritual forces when he tries to get along without joining the church? I have seen many a one who claimed he could live a Christian life outside the church make shipwreck of faith and go down before the world's pelting storm. You may have tried to kindle a fire with one stick of wood, but you found it very difficult; with half a dozen sticks it was easy. The man who tries to keep the fire of devotion burning in his heart outside of the church, and alone, has a hard time.

People are sometimes kept out of the church because of a wrong conception of what the church is. The church is not a place for perfect people simply. If it were you and I would have no place there. The church is for people who need help. We do not join the church because we are good, but because we *want* to be good, because we have an aspiration. The church is a school for the development of character and graduation day seems far away. As one says: "The church receives its members not because they have attained so much, but because there is so much that they need to attain." Further he says: "For admission to be declined on the ground that one is 'not good enough' is to miss the fundamental purpose of the entire institution; and for a

modest person to conceive that becoming part of a church organization is advertising to the public that he has made great advance in the holy life, is the same as it would be for a little four-year-old to understand that admission into the A. B. C. class means his present attainment of a liberal education."

The scholar should be taught to have an appreciation of the church. Without the church there would be no Sunday-schools in which to observe Decision Day. There would be no preaching of the Gospel, there would be no administration of the holy sacraments, there would be no missionary movements to disseminate the glad tidings. Without the church there would have been no evangelistic agency to touch our Western civilization, and we would now be worshipping pagan idols instead of the true and living God.

The church is the only organization in the world that exists "solely for character." The care and culture of character is her work.

Joining the church is not religion. Going to church is not religion. Religion deals with the relation of the soul to God. Dr. Hallack tells of a little girl who was looking in her mother's trunk one day and found her mother's church letter which had failed to

reach the pastor. The little girl rushed to her mother shouting: "Oh, mama, I've found your religion in your trunk." That is not the brand for which we plead. The right kind of religion cannot be put into a letter and boxed up in a trunk.

The church is not an *end* but a *means*. The Bible is not an end but a means. We love the Bible because it reveals God to us. We love the church because she helps to keep us close to the heart of God. The function of the church is to help get us into right relation with God and man, and to keep us in such relation.

The church should be dear to us. The ancient Israelites had the sacred Ark which spoke to them of God. The church is the Ark of God to-day. The Ark was dear to the Israelites. Its very presence inspired their hearts. When the Ark was brought from Shiloh into the Hebrew camp the Israelites "shouted with a great shout so that the earth rang again." Its presence thrilled the people of God with hope, and smote their foes with despair. The Philistines said: "God is come into the camp of the Hebrews." One day aged Eli sat by the gate waiting for tidings from the battle. His sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were fighting in the

ranks. There was great slaughter that day, and a man of Benjamin ran from the army and came to Shiloh where Eli waited. The messenger said: "Israel is fled from before the Philistines." This was sad news, but not insurmountable. Then the man said: "Thy sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead." This was terrific, but not unbearable. Then the messenger said: "The Ark of God is taken." At that announcement Eli fell dead. The Ark was unspeakably precious. We should heartily sing:

"I love Thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of Thine abode,
The Church our blest Redeemer saved
With His own precious blood.

"I love Thy Church, O God!
Her walls before Thee stand,
Dear as the apple of Thine eye,
And graven on Thine hand."

So after Decision Day let pastor and teacher magnify the church, and so present the real purpose of the church that those who have made decision for Christ will see the claim of the church upon them, and be led to unite with it. To stop short of this goal is to omit a very important matter in connection with Sunday-school Decision Day.

Livingstone said one time: "The end of the exploration is the beginning of the enterprise." And we must remember that the end of the service on Decision Day is but the beginning of the task we have undertaken.

VI

HOW TO PREPARE A SUNDAY-SCHOOL LESSON

"Other things being equal, the difference between success and failure in the work of a Sunday-school teacher is usually a matter of preparation. Ample, intelligent, and painstaking preparation will often change what would otherwise be drudgery into a satisfying pleasure."—*Marion Lawrance.*

"The teacher who ceases to grow ceases to teach. That is why a Sunday-school lesson cannot be crammed. That is why preparation for it must extend all through the week. Growth cannot be ordered offhand. It comes from Father Time's shop, and he is a deliberate workman. You will lose your hold on your class if each Sunday hour does not begin with you a little above them, and end with them at your level. This advance cannot be won Saturday night, or during the space between the first and second bells for Sunday-school. Such a spasmodic leap ahead will leave you too much out of breath even to tell them to come on."—*Amos R. Wells.*

"There is nothing dramatic about the Sunday-school, but of all service it is the most real, essential and fruitful. If the Church would once awake to this, the result would astonish it and the world. This would mean the most real of revivals. No spasmodic revival could compare with it. It is work that begins at the right end; it is positive, constructive, abiding, fruitful beyond compare."—*W. L. Watkinson.*

VI

How to Prepare a Sunday-School Lesson

IT is easier to give advice than to follow it. There can be no inflexible method outlined for the study of the Sunday-school lesson. Different persons can successfully adopt different methods. Different lessons may require different modes of preparation.

There are some *preliminaries* that we may well consider before we come to the preparation of the lesson itself.

The teacher should *know his class* before he can decide best how to prepare to teach his class. He should know their spiritual and mental condition, their social surroundings, and their home influences. He must know their attainments and their needs before he can bring the right supply. He must know the scholar's lack, his ignorance, then he may be able to offer the fitting knowledge. It has been said that "we cannot make another comprehend our knowledge until we first comprehend his ignorance."

This knowledge of his class will help the

teacher to settle upon an *aim* in his teaching. If all in his class are Christians he will not have just the same end in view as he would if none were Christians. In one case he will seek to confirm, to edify, to expand, and to intensify; in the other he will strive more to bring to a decision for Christ.

Another preliminary we may consider is our *Lesson Helps.* Every teacher needs a Reference Bible, a concordance, a Bible dictionary, and Bible maps. These are essential. A text-book that gives Bible references by subjects is very valuable. After these helps you may add Sunday-school journals, commentaries, etc., as many as you have time and money for.

We now come to the study of the lesson.

Begin early. Preparation on Saturday night or Sunday morning is not adequate. Give the lesson a chance to get into the fibre of your being. Let its truths burn in your heart. Pray during the week about the lesson. Seek light and help from God. If you begin early in your preparation you may think of the lesson on the street, in the store, in the shop, and wherever you may be at work.

Another advantage of early preparation is that illustrations will occur to you coming

out of your own life, and one illustration of your own is apt to be worth many borrowed ones. It might not be so good for the printed page, but the fact that it is your own will lead you to present it with more spirit and power.

Read the intervening verses and chapters as well as the lesson. This will clear up many things that might otherwise seem difficult. Our International Lessons, which we do not criticize, are, nevertheless, a "hop, skip, and jump" method of going through the Bible. It cannot be otherwise. The teacher is the person to counteract the weakness of this plan. The teacher must supply the connecting links.

Study the lesson at first *without the Lesson Helps*. Read it in the Accepted and Revised Versions. Read parallel passages and side references. Scripture often illuminates Scripture. What seems obscure in one place will be made clear by a kindred passage.

Be independent of Lesson Helps as long as you can. This will develop power. This will require great determination. When you find a difficulty do not do the *easiest* thing, which is to turn and see what some one else says about it. Do the *best* thing, study it, find out what you think about it. Let com-

mentaries, dictionaries, and journals alone until you have done your best. The great quantity of Lesson Helps used at the wrong time is apt to produce a company of superficial Bible students. Here is a really serious danger.

Having studied the lesson carefully you may then profitably see what others have to say about it. You may then use all the helps you can find. But if you have seen a truth in the lesson and it has made a profound impression upon you, do not leave that truth to take up thoughts that others have suggested. The truth that arrests your attention and grips you is the one for you to teach, that is the truth that you can make live and glow before your class in such a way as to impress them.

One plan for the study of a lesson that has had much favour is to ask the questions suggested by "The Five W's": "When? Where? Whom? What? Why?" These five questions answered concerning any lesson will give the time of the lesson, the geography of the lesson, the persons of the lesson, the incidents of the lesson, and the application of the lesson.

But beyond all helps and all methods is the personality of the teacher. And it has

been wisely said that those Lesson Helps are the best which *set* you thinking, not those which *save* you thinking. Study is a necessity to the good teacher. It is not easy to teach a Sunday-school lesson. No teacher can lead his class up the clear heights of the mountain of truth without study.

Centre upon a few thoughts rather than try to discuss many thoughts. Find the great central truth of the lesson and seek to make everything illustrate, impress, and emphasize that truth. The "golden text" generally contains that truth. But as indicated above, if some other truth has gripped you follow where your interest lies.

Do not spend too much time on the historical phase of the lesson. The time and place of the lesson may well receive attention, for this is necessary for intelligent study. But let there be suitable proportion in the lesson period. If the lesson is about Daniel in the lion's den do not plan to spend half the time talking about the different kinds of lions. A teacher said to her boys one day: "Did you ever hear the story of 'Jack, the Giant-killer'?" "No!" was the response. "Well," said the teacher, "I will tell you that story." Most of the lesson period was consumed by the recital of that

tale. Perhaps the subject of the Sunday-school lesson was: "David and Goliath." David was a giant-killer and brief reference to the above story might be fitting, but to allow it to usurp the whole lesson period showed lack of sense of proportion.

To teach a Sunday-school lesson is not to teach poetry, nor to tell pretty stories, nor to present beautiful similes. All these may be appropriately used to illustrate and impress the great truths of the lesson. But here are immortal souls before the teacher. They live in a world of temptation and sin one hundred and sixty-seven hours every week. They are in the Sunday-school one hour per week. The teacher has thirty minutes out of one hundred and sixty-eight hours to impress them with divine truth. Here are hearts that need help, encouragement, enlightenment, and guidance. They need the truth concerning the deepest questions and the most vital issues of life. The teacher must not plan to feed them chaff, they need the bread of life. He must not give them simply poetry, sentiment, similes, and flowers. He must give them food suitable unto their need. The teacher must select some vital, inspiring, helpful truth and seek by every means within his command to impress that

truth upon them. He must illustrate it, reillustrate it, repeat it, reiterate it, emphasize it until it is burned into the souls of the members of his class. He must not fail to make them feel it. He must feel it himself, and then they will be apt to feel it also.

In his approach to the scholar the teacher must find the "line of least resistance." He must find the plane on which his scholar lives. Dr. H. Clay Trumbull [1] gives a fine illustration of this. A teacher in a city mission school asked question after question of a new little scholar without getting a satisfactory answer. The boy did not know who made him, who the first man was, who built the ark, or who was cast into the lion's den. In despair the teacher at last said: "Why, my boy, what do you know?" The boy's face brightened and he answered cheerily: "I know the 'head' from the 'tail' of a cent." The teacher for the first time knew that boy's level. That boy had seen the older boys pitch pennies, and he had learned the difference between the "head" and the "tail" of a cent. The penny could be used as a starting point with that scholar. From there the teacher could go on to tell what Jesus said about the penny.

[1] "Teaching and Teachers," p. 170.

Du Bois[1] relates how the orientalist, Canon Tristram, when in Ceylon addressed an audience of native Christians through an interpreter. He chose for his subject: "The Good Shepherd." He says: "My interpreter told me afterwards that not one of my hearers had ever seen a sheep, or knew what it was. 'How then did you explain what I said?' I asked. 'Oh,' he replied, 'I turned it into a buffalo that had lost its calf and went into the jungle to find it.'" That interpreter had the instinct of a teacher.

The teacher must *study the art of asking questions.* It is easy to ask questions if you do not care how you ask them. It is difficult to ask questions in such a way as to draw out the thoughts of the scholars.

Some of the Lesson Helps years ago used to print the questions with the answers directly beneath. Some scholars would learn these answers by rote. No matter what the first question might be answer number one would come. A teacher tells of his experience with one of the lessons. The topic for the day was "The Walk to Emmaus." The first question was, "Where is Emmaus?" The teacher recalled that the scholar to his right was a boy who had been absent the

[1] "Point of Contact," p. 91.

previous Sunday. The teacher asked: "Where were you last Sunday, Joseph?" Quick as a flash came back the answer: "Seven and a half miles northwest of Jerusalem." He had answered the first printed question: "Where is Emmaus?" The teacher said in mortified response: "Well, you are certainly excusable for not being here."

That to ask questions and receive answers is a good method of teaching grows out of the very nature of the mind. Bushnell used to say: "We never know a thing until we have said it." Professor Hart says: "The knowledge is really not theirs (the pupils) until they have reproduced it and given it expression. They do not grasp it with a clear and lasting apprehension until they have expressed it in language. This is one of the laws of mental action. We fix a thing in our minds by communicating it to another; we make it plain to ourselves by the very effort to give it explanation. Or, to state the matter still more paradoxically, we learn a thing by telling it to somebody; we keep it by giving it away."

Take only the Bible to the class. Do this for the sake of your class and for your own sake. It impresses the class with the thought

that you have mastered your lesson, that you are not going to give them what others think about the lesson, but what you feel is the real message of the lesson. It makes you prepare so that you are independent; the lesson has become a part of you. It emphasizes the fact that the Bible is the one great Book which is studied from week to week.

Think often of the importance of your work. This reflection is an important part of your preparation. Abbott says: "If a man builds nature straightway sets to work to undo his building. Rust eats into the iron and decay into the wood, and little by little time ravages and destroys. But if man plants nature proceeds to complete his unfinished work."

The teacher is a sower. The seed he sows is the Word of God. He plants truth in human hearts. Its garnering shall be an eternal harvest. The teacher seeks to save hearts from the misery and thralldom of sin, and to bind them in an everlasting covenant to Christ our King. This is work worthy of an archangel's endeavour.

When Dr. Kane had passed through six months of arctic night he said that to be in the sunlight was like bathing in perfumed

waters. The Sunday-school teacher is to keep young hearts from going into the arctic midnight of sin, and to lead them forth into the summer land of faith, and hope, and trust, and noble living.

When the simoom is sweeping o'er the desert with its poisonous breath as if from a fiery furnace the Arabs fall prostrate on the sand and hide from its withering breath. It is the Sunday-school teacher's holy task to keep young feet from the simoom of sin and from the sirocco of sinful pestilence and death. And if their scholars are already in the simoom of sin to lead them to the feet of Him who alone can save them from its blighting breath.

It is sad to see little birds shivering in the cold nest and no mother to sing her song to the orphan brood, but the Sunday-school teacher often brings the sweet lessons of comfort and hope to orphan children, and leads many to One who sticketh closer than a brother.

Appreciate your work! The factors that enter into your task are God, and the Bible, and immortal spirits, and destiny, and yourself. Be patient. Eternity will reveal the fidelity of your sowing, and if you go forth even weeping now, but bearing precious

seed, you shall yet come with rejoicing bringing your sheaves with you.

Live the gospel you teach. A holy life is an essential preparation for your sacred work. Your life as an incarnation of the truth you teach is a preparation no teacher can afford to neglect. The teacher's spirit, life, character are an asset beyond all that words can express. An incarnated gospel speaks more potently than a written gospel.

> "And so the Word had breath, and wrought
> With human hands the creed of creeds
> In loveliness of perfect deeds,
> More strong than all poetic thought."

We need living gospels as well as written gospels. When a true teacher stands before his class he presents both.

VII

SUNDAY-SCHOOL INSTALLATION SERVICE

"The church should extend its hand of welcome to the man who consecrates his gifts to the work of teaching in the Sabbath-school. A word of counsel and encouragement at that important stage may have a most salutary effect upon his future career. The public recognition would favourably impress the church itself, and give the teacher increased power over his scholars."—*John H. Vincent.*

"The formal installation of the officers and teachers elect of the Sunday-school should generally obtain. It is more than a matter of form. Impressively conducted, it becomes one of the most profitable services of the Sunday-school year."

—*H. M. Hamill.*

"The benefits of a service for the installation of officers and teachers must be apparent to all. It enables the pastor in a vivid manner to call the attention of the whole church to the importance of the Sunday-school work, and to impress upon the officers and teachers their responsibility in the positions they hold. Officers thus inducted into their office are apt to attach more importance to their work than they otherwise would."

—*Marion Lawrance.*

VII

Sunday-School Installation Service

THE Sunday-school officers and teachers are the noblest volunteer army in the world. To have a public installation service for these devoted workers is bestowing honour where honour is due. It impresses the officers and teachers with the thought of responsibility and obligation. It gives dignity and significance to the work done by the Sunday-school. It puts needed emphasis upon the teaching function of the church. An entire service may well be given to it. The whole Sunday-school should be invited to be present. The pastor should preside, and he, or some invited minister, should preach an appropriate sermon upon a theme vital to the highest interests of the Sunday-school. We give below a program for such an occasion.

Order of Installation Service

1. Organ voluntary, while the ushers conduct the officers and teachers to seats reserved for them.

This chapter is used with the permission of the Board of Sunday Schools of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

2. Hymn:

Lamp of our feet, whereby we trace
Our path when wont to stray;
Stream from the fount of heavenly grace,
Brook by the traveller's way.

Bread of our souls, whereon we feed,
True manna from on high;
Our guide and chart, wherein we read
Of realms beyond the sky.

Word of the everlasting God,
Will of His glorious Son;
Without thee how could earth be trod,
Or heaven itself be won?

Lord, grant us all aright to learn
The wisdom it imparts;
And to its heavenly teaching turn,
With simple, childlike hearts. Amen.

3. Collect: O Lord, the Author of spiritual life, who hast given unto us the good seed of Thy Word; grant that we may receive it into honest hearts; and so guard it by Thy grace from the wiles of Satan and the cares of this life, that the faith and hope and love which Thou hast begotten may be in us the beginning of life eternal, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

4. Prayer.

5. Anthem.

6. Responsive Scripture lesson:

Minister—And all the people gathered

themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate, and they spake unto Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the Lord had commanded to Israel.—*Neh. viii. 1.*

Congregation—And Ezra the priest brought the law before the congregation both of men and women, and all that could hear with understanding, upon the first day of the seventh month.—*Neh. i. 2.*

Minister—And he read therein before the street that was before the water gate from the morning until midday, before the men and the women, and those that could understand and the ears of all the people were attentive unto the book of the law.—*Neh. i. 3.*

Congregation—And Ezra the scribe stood upon a pulpit of wood, and he opened the book in the sight of all the people, and when he opened it all the people stood up.—*Neh. i. 4, 5.*

Minister—And Ezra blessed the Lord, the great God. And all the people answered, Amen, Amen, with lifting up their hands; and they bowed their heads, and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground.—*Neh. i. 6.*

Congregation—And they caused the people to understand the law; and the people stood in their place. So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.—*Neh. i. 7, 8.*

Minister—When all Israel is come to appear before the Lord thy God in the place which He shall choose, thou shalt read this law before all Israel in their hearing.—*Deut. xxxi. 11.*

Congregation—Gather the people together, men and women, and children, and the stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law.—*Deut. xxxi. 12.*

Minister—And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children.—*Isa. liv. 13.*

Congregation—Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law.—*Ps. cxix. 18.*

Minister—Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it. Bring the children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.—*Prov. xxii. 6; Eph. vi. 4.*

Congregation—Those that he planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.—*Ps. xcii. 13.*

Minister—And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.—*1 Cor. xii. 28.*

Congregation—Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according

to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching.—*Rom. xii. 6, 7.*

Minister—Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind.—*1 Peter v. 2.*

Congregation—That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth: that our daughters may be as corner-stones, polished after the similitude of a palace.—*Ps. cxliv. 12.*

Minister—I beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called.—*Eph. iv. 1.*

Congregation—We would be meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work.—*2 Tim. ii. 21.*

7. Gloria Patri.
8. Offering.
9. Hymn:

Sow in the morn thy seed;
At eve hold not thy hand;
To doubt and fear give thou no heed,
Broadcast it o'er the land.

Thou knowest not which shall thrive,
The late or early sown;
Grace keeps the precious germ alive,
When and wherever strown.

And duly shall appear,
In verdure, beauty, strength,
The tender blade, the stalk, the ear,
And the full corn at length.

Thou canst not toil in vain;
Cold, heat, and moist, and dry,
Shall foster and mature the grain
For garners in the sky. Amen.

10. The Installation Sermon and Prayer.

11. Responsive Service, minister, and officers and teachers standing:

Minister—The Church, led by the Holy Spirit, has called you to your responsible positions. It is fitting that you make hearty response to the following questions:

Will you seek to adorn the Gospel of Christ in your daily living and prayerfully seek preparation for your teaching?

Officers and Teachers—We will study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.—*2 Tim. ii. 15.*

Minister—What place does the Word of God have in your work?

Officers and Teachers—Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness; that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work.—*2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.*

Minister—Whence is your sufficiency for your sacred task?

Officers and Teachers—Our sufficiency is of God. For unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.—*2 Cor. iii. 5; Eph. iv. 7.*

Minister—When tempted to become weary in well-doing, and to cease your work, what may well be your answer?

Officers and Teachers—I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it?—*Neh. vi. 3.*

Minister—What does God say of the true and faithful teachers?

Officers and Teachers—And the teachers shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars forever and ever.[1]—*Dan. xii. 3.*

COVENANT

I propose to be exemplary in life, diligent in study, devout in spirit, regular and punctual in attendance, faithful according to my ability, so that I may win, edify, and save my scholars.

12. Consecration Prayer.

13. Hymn:

Lord, speak to me, that I may speak
In living echoes of Thy tone;
As Thou hast sought, so let me seek
Thy erring children lost and lone.

O teach me, Lord, that I may teach
The precious things Thou dost impart;
And wing my words, that they may reach
The hidden depths of many a heart.

[1] Marginal Reading.

O fill me with Thy fullness, Lord,
Until my very heart o'erflow
In kindling thought and glowing word,
My love to tell, Thy praise to show.

O use me, Lord, use even me,
Just as Thou wilt, and when, and where,
Until Thy blessed face I see,
Thy rest, Thy joy, Thy glory share. Amen.

14. Apostolic Benediction.

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